

# VALMIKI RAMAYAN

Condensed



SRIKRISHNA PRAPNNACHARI

समर्पण



श्रीमद्भगवतो प्राकुंशाचार्यजी महाराज

*Srimate Ramanujay Namah***Preface**

The Ramayan hardly needs any introduction. It contains the divine legend of one of the most loved incarnations of Narayan. He was born as a son of the king of Ayodhya, Dasarath.

His marriage to Sita (goddess *lakshmi* divine consort), who was born from the womb of earth, daughter of Janak, could only take place when He strung the colossal bow of Shiv. The story of His wedding<sup>1</sup> forms one of the corner stones of this scripture. Vishwamitr, in the pretext of seeking guard to his sacred rites, ushers Him out from Ayodhya and finally reaches Mithila, the ultimate place of the wedding.

Renouncing the right of crown to honour his father, he spent fourteen years in forest as a part of a divine plan to eliminate the demons and free the earth from the devil's menaces.

There are as many versions of Ramayan as many true devotees. Every true devotee portrays the divine pastimes according to his perceptive affection to the almighty lord. Valmiki Ramayan in Sanskrit, is one of the most primitives in the hands of the worldly folks. This, thus forms the fountain head of all the succeeding Ramayan in multiple of languages.

The number of *Sarg* and *shlok* in each *kand* are as below:

<i>Balkand</i>	77	2266
<i>Ayodhya</i>	119	4310
<i>Aranya</i>	75	2467
<i>Kishkindha</i>	67	2362
<i>sundar</i>	68	2858
<i>yuddh</i>	128	5784
<i>Uttar</i>	111	3722
<b>Total</b>	<b>645</b>	<b>23769</b>

*Srimann Narayan Charnau Sharnam Prapaddye.* (श्रीमन्नारायण चरणौ शरणम् प्रपदे )

Submission:

Srikrishna Prapnnachari

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<sup>1</sup> One separate full coverage on the wedding of the lord is being attempted to be presented soon.

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*Srimate Ramanujaya namah*

## Bal kand

### (77 sarg)

#### 1-1. **Narad's sankshep Ramayan (Ramayan in nutshell from Narad) (100)<sup>1</sup>:**

Valmiki once enquired from Narad, "Who is the best among men who has got all the ideal qualities? Tell me about him in detail." Narad was of the view, "Among human beings such personality is hard to find. He will, however, describe about Ram about whom he had learnt from Brahma."

Narad continued, "Advent of Ram is in Ikshavku dynasty. He has got rare divine personality of Vishnu (1-1-18)<sup>2</sup> and is possessed with charming divine physique, knowledge of all Vedas and scriptures and well versed in archery and war fare skills. Looking to his qualities, his father king Dasarath decides to crown him as his successor. The claim of two boons by Kakeyi, forces Ram to go to forest, and instead crown is sought for Bharat. Ram is joined by Lakshman, and Sita, and riding the chariot leaves for the forest.

For some distance his father and citizens of Ayodhya follow him on way to the forest (1-1-29). Arriving at Sringeripur he sends back the chariot and accepts the hospitability of Guha, the tribal chief of the place. After crossing Ganga he meets Bhardwaj and on his advice he moves to settle in the forest of Chitrakoot. Dasarath dies hearing settling of Ram in Chitrakoot. Vashishtha impresses upon Bharat to become the king, but instead he goes to the forest to get back Ram as the ruler king. Ram sends back Bharat with his sandals under assurance that he will come back after completing the boon of his father. Bharat staying at Nandigram remained as the custodian king.

Expecting regular interference in his forest tenure from Ayodhya, Ram moved further deep in the forest in the area of Dandakaranya. He killed Viradha, gave divine welfare to the sages Sarbhanga, Sutikshna, and met Agastya and his brother (1-1-41). Agasty gifts Ram the bow of Indra with everlasting two quivers, and a sword. He assures sages to eliminate demons and free them from their torture. Surpanakha of Janasthan from Dandakaranya is disfigured. On her initiative demons attack on him, and he kills Khar, Trishira, and Dushan along with other fourteen thousand strong demons. Ravan when gets the news, under convulsing rage, he approaches Mareech and although forewarned by him for not entering into rivalry with Ram, he brings Mareech to the ashram of Ram, and by magical tricks when Ram and Lakshman are taken away to a remote place, he succeeds in abducting Sita.

Jatayu suffers severe injury by the sword of Ravan when trying to protect Sita. When Ram meets Jatayu he succumbs to the injuries after telling him how Ravan had abducted Sita. He cremated Jatayu and wailed for his loss of life. On way he kills and cremates the demon Kabandh, who when moving to heaven guides him to go to Shabari around there. He goes to Shabri and receives great respect from her. He meets Hanuman at Pampa lake and befriends Sugriv sanctified by fire after he told all about himself in general and Sita in particular. Sugriv then narrates his state of torture by his elder brother Vali. Ram promises to kill Vali but Sugriva remains skeptical of his strength and tells the stories about the mighty Vali. When

<sup>1</sup> Number of *shlok* in the *sarg*

<sup>2</sup> The reference 1 is for *Balkand*, 1 for *sarg* one, 18 for serial number of *shlok* in that *sarg*

he shows Ram the mountainous remains of the demon Dundubhi, Ram throws to ten *yojan* the whole lot in a trice by one of his foot thumbs, but Sugriva still remains doubtful. When Ram threads with one arrow seven massive sal trees and the same arrow passing through a great mountain damages a portion of the netherworld, Sugriva becomes confident and takes him to the cave (1-1-67) like Kishkindha. When Vali was coming out hearing Sugriv's roar, Tara cautioned him about Ram as Sugriv's helper, but he didn't listen to her. In duel with Sugriv, Ram killed Vali by one shaft only and made Sugriv the king.

Sugriv gathers monkeys to locate Sita. On the advice of Sampathi, the elder brother of Jatayu, Hanuman leaps over one hundred *yojan* wide sea and arrives in Lanka where he finds Sita meditating in Ashoka *vana*. Offering Ram's souvenir and his message to her, he smashes the tree arches of Ashok *vana*. He kills five army commanders, seven sons of ministers, Akshay son of Ravan, and finally get trapped in fetters which he was capable of destroying but he didn't do that with an objective of meeting Ravan. He burns Lanka to ashes and reaches Ram with the message of Sita's location. Ram arrives at seashore with monkeys and when sea-god doesn't pay heed to his request, he tortures the sea with his arrow. Sea god appears and advises him to build a bridge with the help of Nal, and on completion of the bridge he crosses to Lanka and kills Ravan. When Sita is released, he expresses his apprehension to her about her chastity and asks her to enter into fire. When she enters into fire and fire god gives her back sanctifying her love to Ram, he rejoices meeting her. He enthrones Vibhishan and getting respects from gods and from their help reviving the dead monkeys to life boarding Pushpak he leaves for Ayodhya. On way he stops at Bhardwaj ashram and sends Hanuman to Bharat in advance. He leaves for Nandigram and reaching there he discards the hair-locks rejoicing the union with his brothers. He assumes the mantle of the king."

Concluding thus Narad predicts further to Valmiki, "The earth shall become joyful in complete social harmony, and free from all shortcomings, and diseases when Ram shall become the ruler. He will perform hundred *aswmedha ygya* and give precious gifts of gold and cows to Brahmins. Ruling for eleven thousand years he will depart to the divine abode. This Ramayan full with the glory of Ram, when recited shall prove a great redeemer and provider of auspiciousness in return to all four categories (*varn* known as *Brahmin*, *kshatriya*, *vaisya*, *shudra*) of the society according to their status."

## 1-2. Versatile Verse (43) :

On completion of Narad's narration of the essence of Ramayan, Valmiki offered him great reverence with his disciples. Thereafter he left the place for his cosmic wandering. Valmiki with his disciple Bhardwaj left for river Tamasaa to take his bath. After his bath when he was changing his cloth on the river bank, his attention caught a sight of a pair of birds enjoying their conjugal life which didn't last longer, and the male bird dropped dead by the cruel shaft of a hunter. The wailing cry of the female bird and beating herself again and again over the dead body of his life partner moved Valmiki to his core. On his own, instantly came out from his mouth the following verse in Sanskrit which is taken as the primordial composition (1-2-15) for all subsequent generation of literature.

मा निषाद् प्रतिष्ठास्त्व । मगमः शाश्वतीः समाः ।

यत् क्रौञ्च मिथुनात् एक । मवधीः काम मोहितम् ॥ १-२-१५



His disciple Bhardwaj and others picked up the glorious recitation immediately. Coming back to the *ashram* the sage's mind was engaged in the scene and he continued brooding over his composition. In the meanwhile Brahma arrived and when his welcome and worshipping were over the sage was noticed engaged mentally as well as reciting the verse involuntarily. Brahma revealed to Valmiki that it was his divine wish that he composed that verse. He further mentioned, "As learnt from Narad you will compose the glorious legend of Ram to be known as Ramayan. Your composition will remain eternal so long as earth and the universe exists." Brahma, concluding thus, vanished from there. Valmiki along with his disciples, for sometime after that continued reciting the verse, from beginning as well as in reverse order from end. He found the verse uniquely expressive and observing a set pattern of composition using simple syllable of words spread over four quarters which was not known earlier and was devised by Valmiki for the first time.

### 1-3. Ramayan composed (39)

As foretold by Brahma Valmiki commenced composing the Ramayan and all episodes and legends continued unfolding to him automatically through his meditative reflections. He sat east facing over a grass (*kush*) mat, purifying his hands with water, folding the palms together when he entered into reflective meditation all scenes of Ram, Lakshaman, Sita, Dasarath accompanied by his wives, flashed before him as if witnessing the real scene of exchange of smiles, conversation, and performances of Ram. He could see him accompanied by Sita in the forest besides the male company of his brother (Lakshaman). He composed as an author actualizing the legend of Ram as narrated to him by Narad.

*It begins with the birth and incarnation of Ram and continues further sequentially which Valmiki described, "Besides of his several delighting anecdotes, he helped Viswamtira, broke the mighty bow and married Sita. Ram Prashuram meet, Dasarath plan to anoint him as king disrupted by Kakeyi leading to the death of Dasarath, deserting citizens, meeting Guha, returning the charioteer Sumanth, crossing Ganga, honouring Bhardwaj, coming to Chitrakoot, coming of Bharat, offering water oblation to father hearing about his death, Ram sandals enthroned by Bharat staying at Nandigram, Ram moving to Dandakranya, killing of Viradh, meeting sages Sarbhanga, Sutikshna, getting together of Sita and Anusuya, and offering of angrag by Anusuya to Sita, honouring Agastay and getting blessed by him with the gift of bow, Surpnakha and her defacing, end of Khara, Trishira incited Ravan, killing of Marich, abduction of Sita, anguished wailing of Ram, emancipating Jatayu, liberating Kavandh, moving to Pampa, getting honour of Shavari and obliging her by accepting her fruits, meeting Hanuman at Pampa, together with Sugriv at Rishymuka, end of Vali, grieving of Tara, crowning of Sugriv, spending rainy days with him, his anger causing Sugriv to collect a host of monkeys sending to all quarters, describing the global situation, sending ring (with Hanuman), coming to Rikska cave of monkeys and fast to death, seeing Sampathi, Hanuman's leaping across sea from mountain top, meeting Mainak mountain, encountering demoness (Sursa), killing of Sinhika (shadow grabber), coming to mountain (Trikoota) of Lanka, entering at Night, visiting Ravan and his Pushpak, Sita's glimpse in Ashoka vana, offering of ring to Sita and talking to her, watching misdeeds of demoness, hearing bad dreams of Trijata, accepting Sita ornament (for Ram), damaging garden, killing of guards,*

noose to Hanuman, burning Lanka, victorious blaring and coming back across sea, enjoying honey garden, delivering Sita's ornament as solace to Ram, meeting Ram with Sea, bridging over sea by Nal, Laying siege of Lanka at night, joining of Vibhishan (1-3-35 : *this sequence is not in Narad's narration of Ramayan in first sarga*), planning about end of demons, killing of Kumbhakarna, Meghnad, end of Ravan, retrieving Sita, enthroning Vibhishan, observing celestial Pushpak viman, honouring Bhardwaj on return journey to Ayodhya, sending Hanuman to Bharat, getting enthroned, disbanding monkey army, ruling to please the citizens, discarding Sita." Ram's stay on earth and all his legends are minutely described by Valmiki in the epic.

#### 1-4. Kush and Lav sang Ramayan (36)

Valmiki composed (1-4-2) twenty four thousand *shloka* (verse), contained in five hundred *sarg* (chapters) and forming six *kand* (books). There was a later piece of book also called *Uttara kand*. In fact, on completion, of the Ramayan containing glory of Sita establishing the end of Ram, when Valmiki was sitting in contemplative mood thinking as to who would sing these beautiful verses into melodious voice, two brothers Kusha and Lav came to him and touched his feet. They were handsome and like true images of Ram himself. Soon they learnt the entire Ramayan and gave a melodious voice in tune with the guitar.

Once their presentation to the gathering of sages earned them glorious laurels and they were passing singing and playing guitar, through the royal thoroughfare, Ram spotted them and brought them with honour to the court. Giving them due respectful seat, and occupying himself his throne amidst his four brothers and ministers, enjoyed their melodious song of Ramayan accompanied by playing the guitar. Ram was greatly impressed by the entire set of excellently worded storeys, and showed greater interest in the portion of the song which covered the legend about Sita. On his request, the two singers, who were well versed in musical and singing art presented the song in special style of *marga* rhythm (1-4-36) as well.

#### 1-5. Ayodhya – physical (23)

There was a kingdom called Koshal, which had valorous forefathers like Sagar whose sixty thousand sons dug up the ocean, Iksahavaku the gem of the dynasty. The capital of Koshal was Ayodhya, established by Manu, the first among human beings. The king Dasarath resided as Indra resided in Amravati. The city was situated on the bank of river Saryu spread over in the length of 12 *yojan*, and breadth of 3 *yojan*. The ramparts of the city were high and impregnable surrounded with moats. The layout of the city has *ashtapadi* (1-5-16) (octagonal) pattern, avenues swept and moist with water having flowers strewn all over. The houses had large setbacks and beautifully decorated and maintained. The cluster of gardens with mango groves enhanced the beauty of the city. The city had a host of hundreds of charioteers fully versed in the game of hunting the wild animals lions, tigers etc. using sonic-archery. Sages and ascetics surrounded the city with their hermitages performing *ygya* and observing the *vedic* practices.

### 1-6. Ayodhya – social (28)

The king of the city, Dasartha, was like Indra or Kuber, knower of all the religious and spiritual scriptures, *veda*, performer of all sorts of *ygya*, and known for eliminating enemies. He topped the list of Ikshavaku house of rulers for his several credits, viz., the fastest charioteer, the top-seeded archer, etc. The city was occupied by the people of riches, religious faith, and austerity. Nobody was seen without a crown over the head. There was no scarcity of food, drink and other necessary daily items. No beggar was spotted. All the four classes of people resided in the city with full fervor of religion. They worshiped their deities, and sacrificial fire existed in all the houses. Kshatriya took care of the Brahmins, Vaishya worked in coordination with Kshatriya, and Shudra took care of all the three classes (1-6-19). The city had horses (1-6-22) from Kambhoj, Bahlik, Vanayuj and also from the region of river-beds. The elephants were from Vindhya, and the Himalayas (1-6-23/24/25), and were of the species of Iravata (of Indra), Anjana (of Varun), Vaman (of Yama), and Pundrika having connections to celestial lineages of gods. They were of different categories called Bhadra (for the use of king), Mandra and Mriga (for the use of other nobility and for carriers). Two *yojan* beyond the city was outer rampart as the strict security zone maintained by the king.

### 1-7. Ayodhya – administration (24)

On the physical world affairs, the king was assisted by eight ministers: Dhristi, Jayant, Vijay, Surashtra, Rashtravardhan, Akopa, Dharmpal, and Sumantr. They were all able, austere, moralist, honest, valorous and compassionate. On the religious and spiritual front he had Vashisht and Vamdev the accomplished spiritual personalities to guide his path. Besides, he had other sages and Brahmins: Suygya, Jabali, Kashyap, Gautam, Markandey, Katyayan, Dhargayu, and other *ygya* performing ritual experts of his ancestral legacy.

The ministers had a high public moral and personal character. They were never overpowered by lust, passion or anger while handling the public issues.

### 1-8. Aswamedh ygya (24)

The king once reflected on having no sons and progeny and to get the son he thought of organizing *aswamedh ygya*. Having discussed with his ministers, the ablest one Sumantr was sent to invite his *guru* and Brahmins. When they arrived the king put his proposal which got full support from them. They advised him to commence it at once on the northern bank of Saryu and release the sacrificial horse. The king reminded the participants that if any fault is committed in the ritual and procedure of the *ygya* the *brahm-rakshasha* keep on look out of loopholes and would get success in disrupting it. Ministers and *guru* with Brahmins assured the king that as in the past this *ygya* would also be faultless and successful. Brahmins dispersed and the king also left the council for his inner palace. Reaching his wives he acquainted them with his intention which got a welcome acceptance from them.

**1-9. Invitation to Rishyashring (20)**

Sumantr revealed to the king, “ This relates to your getting the sons. Once Sanakadika had narrated a story to the sages in which they mention about inviting Rishyashring by you for getting the sons. The background story is that sage Kashyap had a son called Bivandak and his son was Rishyashring. Once in the Ang state of king Rompad, there was a severe drought, and on advice of Brahmins the king invited Rishyashring which fetched rains and the famine ended. The king offered his daughter, Shanta to the sage in gratitude (1-9-19 *shlok* also refers that Rishyashring is son-in-law of Dasarath also. Some story relates Shanta to be Dasarath's daughter being brought up by the king Roampad). Therefore you also have to invite him for sons.”

**1-10. Rishyashring (33)**

Sumantr continues, “The sage Rishyashring had always stayed in the forest with his father sage Bivandak, and was totally unaware of the women and other worldly life style. On the advice of the Brahmins the king Rompad sent a group of most beautiful courtesans to impress the sage and get him in his kingdom. Those courtesans made their huts near to the area of the hermitage of Rishyashring. Once the sage saw the courtesans and getting impressed by them as some celestial beings invited them to his hermitage. He offered them proper respect. The courtesans fearing the arrival of Bivandak at the hermitage left the place leaving some tasty sweets as gift to the sage Rishyashring. The sage's mind got engaged over them and next day he went to their place. The courtesans thus seduced him away from the forest gradually and brought him to the Ang region. As soon as the sage stepped in the Ang region heavy rains occurred. The king honoured the sage and offered him his daughter Shanta for his service. Thus onward Rishyashring stayed in Ang kingdom with Shanta.”

**1-11. Rishyashring in Ayodhya (31)**

Sumantr further related the story of the sages sanakadik what they had told, “In the dynasty of Ikshavaku there will a righteous and famous king Dasarath. He will go to king of Ang to invite Rishyashring who will grace his ygya causing birth of four valorous and mighty sons.” Hearing this Dasarath advised Sumantr to tell the story to Vashishth and he himself went inside the palace.

Consequently, he moved with the ministers to Ang and passing several forests, when he reached there, the king Rompad greeted him warmly. After staying there for seven-eight days Dasarath requested Rompad, “I intend to perform ygya to be blessed with sons, and I invite Rishyashring to Ayodhya to grace the occasion.” Rompad readily extended his invitation to Rishyashring. Subsequently, the sage Rishyashring with Shanta left for Ayodhya and on arriving there they were extended royal warm reception, for which Dasarath had arranged in advance by sending a swift footed messenger from Ang when he had departed for Ayodhya with Rishyashring.

**1-12. Rishyashring consented to commence the ygya (22)**

After stay for some time, in the month of spring the King put his proposal to the sage Rishyashring to commence the *ygya* and the sage consented to make all the arrangements and set forth a free horse as a precursor to the *ygya*. The king sent Sumantr to invite sages Suygya, Vamdev, Jabali, Kashyap and his family priest Vashishtha. On the arrival the sages lauded the king's proposal and advised to make all arrangements on the northern bank of Saryu where *ygya* would be performed lead by the sage Rishyashring.

**1-13. Ygya commenced (41)**

On the commencement of next spring after one year, the king entered the *ygya* venue and the steps required to set forth the free horse were organized. Vashishtha addressed the Brahmins and other state workers and advised them to prepare the *ygya* venue with due diligence making all arrangements for stay of the invitee kings, sages, and their horses, elephants etc." He asked Sumantr to invite the kings of the globe, all classes of people (*Brahmins, kshatriya, vaishya, and shudra*) with due respect to all. He advised him to go personally to invite the king Janak, king of Kashi, king of Kakeya who is father-in-law of Dasarath and his son, king of Ang Rompad, king of Koshal Bhanumant, king of Magadth Praptigya. He advised further to take permission of the king Dasarath to invite kings of Sindhu, Sauviri, Saurashtra, and kings of southern zone with kings of the earth. With swift action of Sumantr the kings arrived and offered valuable gifts to Dasarath.

On arrival of the invitee kings, Vashishth invited Dasarath to commence the *ygya* in an auspicious *muhurtha*. Dasarath worshipped Vashishth, Rishyashringa and other sages and resolved to conduct the *ygya*.

**1-14. Details of aswamedh Ygya (60)**

On completion of one year the horse came back to Dasarath. *Ritiwika* (priests leading the ritual procedures) honouring the assembled gods, performed *pravrgya*, and *upsada*. Then followed *savan* in the morning. In the mid day the sap of *som* creeper was used to perform the second *savan* and the third *savan* was also completed as per scriptural commands. All sages and Rishyashring invoked the presence of Indra and other gods. All the Brahmins and invitees were served tasty food and refreshment which they relished. The king had continuous inflow of invitees, and matching was the reception to them with relished food, and cloths. At the time of raising wooden posts, 6 *bilb*, 6 *khadir*, 6 *parin*, 1 *shleshmatak*, 2 *devdaru*: total 21, each 21 cubit high were staked draped with shining cloths, gold, and gems. They looked like constellation of *saptrishi* worshipped with flowers and sandals.

The queen Kaushlya performed the ritual of sacrificing the symbolic horse. The priests continued the sacrifice for three days. Selected and purified bricks wet with milk were used in preparing the fire quarters where oblations were poured. The

shape of the fire quarter was identical to *garuda* with his extended wings and tails. First day sacrifice was called *chatushtom*, second day was *ukthya*, third day was *atiratra*. Although *ashwamedh* was completed in three days oblations but some more important ones were further conducted to ensure the blessings of the progeny and they were *vyotishtom*, *ayushi*, *atiratra*, *abhijit*, *viswajit*, *aptoryam*. Four groups of priests conducting the *ygya* were donated the kingdom: *hota* the east, *adhvaryu* the west, *brahma* the south, *udgata* the north. The Brahmins returned the kingdom to the king as he was capable to rule and Brahmins were engaged in teaching and learning. The king in lieu thereof offered them cows, gold, silver, and gems. The Brahmins surrendered all the gifts to Vashishth and Rishyshring. What they got back from those two chiefs of the ascetics, they distributed among themselves.

The king prayed Rishyshring for conducting the *ygya* for his dynasty. When the sage mentioned that the king would be blessed with four valorous and righteous sons, the king went into ecstasy.

#### **1-15. Son-seeking sacrifice (*putrakameshti ygya*) (34)**

Observing the hymns of *Atharva veda* (1-15-2) Rishyshring began the oblation for son-blessing sacrifice. The assembled gods accepted their part of offerings. The gods took the advantage of this special occasion and addressed to Brahma, "Due to your blessings, Ravan is torturing without fear all of us including the sages on earth. So fearsome is he that fire, wind, and ocean desert their natural characteristics when they face him. Find some way out for his elimination." Brahma thinking aloud expressed, "I have blessed him immortality against *yksha*, gods, *gandharva* etc. but not against a human being. Let his eliminator be a human being." In the meanwhile Vishnu mounting Garuda arrived. Gods offered their prayer and requested him to incarnate as son of Dasarath to eliminate Ravan. Vishnu consented to their prayer and assured them that he would incarnate in the house of Dasarath and after eliminating the demons lead by Ravan rule over there for eleven thousand years.

#### **1-16. Dasarath blessed (32)**

When gods appreciated his assurance, Vishnu asked as to how, using what means the demon chief could be eliminated. The gods advised to kill him in war. After hearing from them that he was required to take birth in human form, he left the place. Soon after that *ygya purusha* appeared from the fire holding a golden pot with silver lid full of *payasam*. The *ygya purusha* was draped in red and black dress fully bejeweled and his face shining red like fire. He addressed Dasarath, "O, King, hold this and distribute them to your wives. They will bring forth sons for you." Dasarath respectfully received the pot, and the divine being disappeared. The king came to his inner palace and gave half of the *payasam* to Kaushlya. Half of the half he gave to Sumirtra. He again made two parts of the balance and gave one half to Kaikeyi, and the other half again to Sumitra. The queens ate the divine *payasam* and in course of time the signs of pregnancy appeared on their body. The king was fully pleased to notice the pregnancy of his wives.

**1-17. Gods advent as monkeys (37)**

Brahma exhorted gods to help Vishnu in the mission of eliminating demons. He cited his own example when he had produced Jambvan, and similar to that the gods should also produce monkeys mighty and valorous. Gods following his advice produced: Vaali (Indra), Sugriv (Sun), Tara (Brihaspati), Nal (Viswakarma), Neel (Fire), Gandhmadan (Kuber), Mayand and Dvid from Aswinikumar, Sushen (Varun), Sharav (Thunder god), Hanuman (Vayu). Thousand more were multiplied from them and they spread over several forests and mountains. First they occupied mountain Rikshavat, and gradually they began spreading all over. They were capable of fighting mightiest elephants, lions and tigers.

**1-18. Incarnation of four brothers and arrival of Vishwamitr (59)**

On conclusion of the *ygya*, the king bade farewell to the sages and invitee kings. Rishyashring with his wife Shanta and father-in-law Rompad left for their abode. The king with his wives entered the palace.

On completion of one complete cycle of the six annual seasons, after the conclusion of the *ygya*, in the month of *chaitra*, on the ninth day of the bright fortnight, Aditi being the deity of the day's ruling star *punarvasu* (1-18-9/12), when the five planets were exalted with Jupiter and Moon in ascendant cancer, Ram incarnated from Kaushlya representing half Vishnu.

Bharat was born from Kaikeyi, in *pushya nakshatra*, in Pisces ascendant and he represented one quarter of Vishnu (1-18-15). Laskshaman and Shatrughan were born from Sumitra when the rising sun of the day was in *ashresha nakshatra*, and they complemented the full representation of Vishnu. (The disposition of stars suggests that Ram was born in seventh star of the asterism, Bharat was born next day in the morning in the eight asterism, and Lakshaman and Shatrughn were born later in the day after Bharat in the ninth *nakshatra*).

The streets were strewn with flowers showered from celestial gods, gems stormed from royal palaces. The occasion was of great rejoicing and celebration.

On the eleventh day Vashisth performed their naming ritual: Elder one Ram, next is Bharat, and the other two as Lakshman and Shatrughn.

Hair tonsuring followed by investing with the sacred thread was celebrated on due time with offering of valuable gifts and feasts to Brahmins and citizens.

From the beginning Ram had affinity for Lakshaman, so much so that in his absence he won't accept food. Bharat had similar affection for Shatrughan. The pair thus bonded together were seen together everywhere be it horse riding, forest hunting, or dining. In due course they learnt *veda* and scriptures along with mastery in archery.

Once when the king was interacting with ministers in royal court about the marriage of his sons, the guard informed him of the arrival of Vishwamitr. The king moved forward with his priests to welcome the sage Vishwamitr. Offering him *arghya* (welcome water) he was given a high seat. Being greeted by Vashishth and others Vishwamitr kept on enquiring the general welfare of the state. The king, then offered to serve the sage, if he had arrived with some specific objective.

#### **1-19. Vishwamitr sought Ram (19)**

The sage revealed, “He has taken a spiritual vow and to complete that mission I am facing hindrance from two demons Mareech and Subahu. It is time bound for ten days and during this vow I can’t show anger which would spoil my mission, otherwise I would have cursed them. I therefore seek the hands of your eldest son, who alone can restrain those two demons and I would be able to complete my mission. You discuss with your ministers and priest Vashishth about this and handover to me Ram.”

#### **1-20. Dasarath refused to spare Ram (28)**

The king replied, “My son is not of sixteen either. I got him after sixty thousand years of my issueless life. How can he be able to face those mighty and cruel demons. Instead, I would go and fight with my army, but I can’t spare Ram.” When he asked the details of the demons, the sage expressed, “In the lineage of Pulsty, the great and mighty demon Ravan is the protector of those two demons Mareech and Subahu.” Hearing about Ravan the king lost his nerve and spoke, “O, Sage, when I am not able to stand against Ravan, how can my son Ram would do that.” Dasarath lost his balance imagining the ferocities of the enemies and he became inconsistent in his statement finally refusing to spare Ram.

#### **1-21. Dasarath brought around (22)**

Hearing refusal of Dasarath, the sage Vishwamitra lost his cool and burst out, “I am going the way I came, but you rejoice in the glory of your dynasty for not keeping the words you gave me when I arrived here.” Hearing his wrathful resolve and ready to leave, Vashishth interfered and assured the king, “The sage Vishwamitra is in possession of potential missiles of *prajapati* Krisaasva. The daughters of prajapati were married to Krishasva, and Jaya and Suprabha beget mighty missiles. The missiles were handed over by Shiva himself to the sage Vishwamitr. Besides, his potential is infinite and he would enrich Ram with those mighty weaponry. He would also see that Ram is totally protected.” Hearing Vashishtha, Dasarath got reasons to consent to spare his son with Vishwamitra.

#### **1-22. Ram, Lakshaman accompanied Vishwamitr (23)**

Dasarath himself brought his sons, Ram and Laskhaman and blessed by the mothers, father and *guru* Vashishth they moved forward following Vishwamitr. Gods showered flowers over them, celestial drums blared in their honour followed by the



conch blaring in Ayodhya. Each one of the two brothers had two quivers perched over their shoulders protruding above the body looking like hoods of snakes. The sage looking like Shiva, lead a pair of trine-headed serpents, behind him. Having gone one and a half *yojan* the sage stopped on the southern bank of Saryu and addressed them, “Before sunset I must impart two potential mantra, *bala* and *atibala* to you. Although your divine potential is apparent still these mantra would help you against hunger, climatic vagaries, and unforeseen troubles in future.” With taking water in hand the sage offered *bala* and *atibala* to them and they spent their night on the bank of Saryu.

### 1-23. Further journey with Vishwamitr (22)

Before the day break, the sage woke up the sleeping brothers from their grass bed reciting the following *shlok* (famous in vaishnavite tradition to lead all the morning recitations called *suprabhatam*).

कौसल्या सुप्रजा राम पूर्वा संध्या प्रवर्तते ।

उत्तिष्ठ नर शार्दूल कर्तव्यम् दैवमाह्निकम् ॥ १-२३-२

On completing their daily spiritual offerings they set out further. Going ahead they came to a hermitage on the confluence of the Ganga and Saryu, where several mendicants were engaged in meditation. Vishwamitr explained to them, “It is a sacred place where Shiva used to meditate. When the god of passion, Kam, tried to interrupt Shiva’s meditation, the enraged eyes of Shiva burnt Kam to ashes. Later he was given back life but without any formal body, and thereafter he is called Anang.” They stayed there for night being greeted by the sages of the hermitage. At night they entered the hermitage after taking ablution in the Ganga and completing the *sandhya gayatri*. Vishwamitr narrated several delighting stories at night.

### 1-24. Forest of Tataka (32)

In the morning after performing *sandhya gayatri* they were escorted by the mendicants to a boat to cross the confluence. In the midst of stream they heard a tumultuous sound coming out of flowing water. On Ram’s enquiry Vishwamitr related thus, “Saryu comes out of a *sar* (lake), called *manas*, created by *brahma* over mount Kailas. The sound is from the Saryu when meeting the Ganga here.”

On getting down on the southern shore of the confluence they moved ahead and entered a deep and desolated forest. Vishwamitr revealed, “This forest was earlier full of lives and riches. Indra when afflicted by sin of killing Vritra demon who was a Brahmin, was freed of his sin here by the efforts of sages and gods who were trying to purify him with sacred water. Indra pleased with his liberation from the sin blessed this land and called it *malada* and *karush* which mean filth and sin of human beings. Since he got freedom from the filth and sin he called them thus. The demoness

Tataka wife of Sund, and her son Mareech haunt this forest often. Tatak is *yakshi* and is alone as mighty as thousand elephants. Mareech is a fearsome strong warrior. You have to be on alert, against them from now onwards.”

#### 1-25. Misdeeds and curse of Tataka (22)

Ram queried, “*Yaksh* are trivial beings, how come she commands such a mighty strength of thousand elephants ?” Vishwamitr narrated the story, “Once *yaksh* Suketu worshipped Brahma to get a progeny. He blessed him with a daughter charming and beautiful and she was Tataka. She was married to Sund, and she begot a son Mareech, a mighty warrior. They together used to intimidate sages, and once Agastya was in their trap. He cursed them to become demon and man eater. Tataka lost the grace of a beautiful woman and since then she and Mareecha under curse of Agstya have become havoc to mankind. No one except you can face them. Don’t hesitate eliminating a woman for she is a sinner. Remember, Indra had to eliminate Manthra daughter of Virochana who was went upon destroying the earth. Similarly Vishnu eliminated mother of Shukracharya, wife of Bhrigu, who was committed to wipe off Indra from his existence. You are the prince, of the territory and the welfare of the people is to be ensured by you.”

#### 1-26. End of Tataka (36)

Assuring the sage that two brothers were obedient to him, Ram sounded the string of his bow. Hearing the frightening sound, Tataka rushed towards him in rage. She began showering stones and boulders over them. With the daunting sound of Vishwamitr the calamity halted away from them, but he exhorted them to eliminate her. Ram shooting his shaft cut off her arms, and Laskhamn mutilated her face by cutting her ears and nose, but she using her magical power, kept raining the stones and boulders. “It is going to be dusk soon, and afterwards she would be invincible,” Said Vishwamitr. Ram using his sound-tracking shaft hit her in the chest and she dropped dead over ground. Gods, Indra and others felicitated Ram over his performance. They urged Vishwamitr to handover the missile of Krisaasva to empower them further. They spent their night in Tataka forest as the forest had regained the erstwhile grandeur and luster after the end of Tataka.

#### 1-27. Vishwamitr bestowed divine missiles (28)

When they got up in the morning, in Tataka forest, Vishwamitr invited Ram with sweet words, “ I am highly impressed by your performance. I am in command of several divine *ashtra* (missiles) and other weaponry under the control of various gods. I want to hand over them to you which will reinforce your potential when you need them in future.” The *ashtra* were as follows: *dand chakr*, *dharm chakr*, *kal chakr*, *Vishnu chakr*, *Indra chakr*, *Shiva’s shul* (trident), *brahmshir*, *aishiki* (dry blade), *brahmashtra*, two maces : *modaki* and *shikhari*, *dharpash*, *kalpash*, *varunpash*, two bolts: *shusk* (drier), *ardra* (drencher), *pinak* (of Shiva), *narayan*, *shikhari* and *pratham* of air god, *hayashir*, *kronch*, two numbers of *shakti*.

Those used by demons and to counter them: *kankal musal* (pounder), two numbers ghor (rods) : *kapal* and *kinkin*.

Favourties of *gandhava*: *vaidyadhara*, *mohan* (stupifier), *prasvapan*, *prasaman*, *varshan*, *soshan*, *santapan*, *vilapan*, *manav*,

Applicable against *pishach* ( like demons): *mohan*, *tamas*, *sauman*, *samvart*, *mausal*, *saty*, *mayamay*,

Other missiles: solar (sungod): *tejprabha*; lunar (moon-god): *shishir* ; *twasta:sudarun*; *bhag:darun*; *manava:shiteshu*

Introducing thus the above said weapons to Ram, the sage Vishwamitr sitting east facing offered them to Ram reciting the divine invoking hymns of each of them. The controlling respective gods appeared there, and submitted to Ram for acceptance. Ram welcoming them gave his full respects to the respective gods of the missiles and advised them to leave for now and spoke, “whenever I need you in future you should appear and perform. “

Thereafter Ram showed his deep reverence to Vishwamitr for offering him divine weapons and they left for further journey.

#### 1-28. Counter weapon to Ram (22)

Ram further enquired for the counter weapons and Vishwamitr readily offered him a host of weapons in command of Krishasva:

*satyvant*, *stykriti*, *dhrist*, *rabhas*, *pratiharatat*, *paranmukh*, *avangmukh*, *dhridanabh*, *sunabh*, *dashaksh*, *shatvaktra*, *dasashirsha*, *satudra*, *padmanabh*, *mahanabh*, *dundnabh*, *svanabh*, *jyotish*, *sakun*, *nairasya*, *vimanl*, *yaugandhar*, *vinidra*, *daitya*, *pramadhan*, *suchibahur*, *mahabahur*, *nishakli*, *viruchar*, *sarchimali*, *dhritamali*, *vrittiman*, *ruchir*, *pitrya*, *saumanas*, *vidhut*, *maker*, *pravira*, *rati*, *dhan*, *dhanayau*, *kamrup*, *kamruchi*, *moham*, *avaranam*, *jimbhrik*, *sarpnath*, *panthan*, *varan*.

The gods of the missiles appeared in different forms as they were capable of changing their form during attack time. Some of them were in the form of smoke, moonlight, folded palm, etc. Ram thanked them and advised them to go back their natural resort and appear when he invoked them. They gave a round to Ram and left.

Moving ahead, Ram noticed a dense forest having flocks of charming birds, and varieties of animals, and enquired Vishwamitr about that.

#### 1-29. Siddh ashram (32)

The forest is around *siddh ashram* where Vishnu practiced meditation for hundreds of years. Later it was possessed by his Vaman incarnation. Virochan's son, Bali was the demons' emperor who had vanquished Indra, Vayu and others and had become

famous in the three worlds. He commenced a vedic *ygya*. Gods keeping fire- god as their leader approached Vishnu and prayed for early restraining of Bali. In the meanwhile Kashyap and Aditi had completed their meditation here in this ashram and in their vision got the *Narayan* enquiring them. They sought him to be born as younger brother of Indra and regain the lost glory of gods on the hands of Bali. Narayan responded positively and appeared as a radiant dwarf, Vaman. He went to Bali and won the three worlds in three steps as a gift from the demon emperor. He then gifted the worlds to Indra and gods were restored to their earlier status.

Vishwamitr said, "This *siddh ashram* has become the place of accomplishment for me also. But here demons create several obstructions in successful completion of *ygya*. You need to safeguard our mission here." Vishwamitr lead two brothers inside the ashram as if moon was accompanied by two favorite asterism of *punarvasu* and *pukhya*. The resident sages welcome them with due reverence. Ram assured the sage to commence the *ygya* and maintained vigilance overnight successfully. Next morning when Ram and Lakshman were ready from their daily ritual of worship, Vishwamitr ignited the *ygya* fire in the altar.

### 1-30. *ygya* a success (26)

When Vishwamitr was engaged in the *ygya* activities, Ram wanted to know what time did demons attack. The sages around him told, "Until completion of *ygya* Vishwamitr maintains silence. This *ygya* is completed in six days and six nights." Hearing that Ram and Lakshman maintained the vigil and it was last day that they heard loud noise in the sky which was coming out of the assemblage of demons over the *siddh ashram*. Ram used the *manav* arrow and Mareech was thrown hundred *yojna* away in the ocean. Using his second arrow *vayu-ashtra* he killed and eliminated the other demons lead by Subahu. On completion of *ygya* Vishwamitr expressed his obligation to Ram and praised his performance. Thus praising Ram, the evening arrived, and they began preparations for attending to *sandhya* worship.

### 1-31. On way to Mithila: Night halt near shon river (24)

Next morning after completing the morning worship, Ram with brother Lakshman came to Vishwamitr and enquired whether he has any further command for them. The sages assembled there informed Ram, "We have got an invitation to attend a *ygya* being performed by the king, Janak. We would like that you may also come with us where you may have an opportunity to see the mighty divine bow in possession of the king. His forefather, Devarat had obtained that bow from gods after performing a vedic *ygya*. (The bow belonged originally to Shiva and he gave it to gods, and from them it came to the house of Mithila) The bow is worthy of a glimpse as it is tough to string for a common human being. On special occasions it is open to public view otherwise it is worshipped with due rituals everyday inside the palace." Vishwamitr set out assuming the tacit consent of Ram and Lakshman to accompany him. His accompanying sages came out of the hermitage with hundreds of carts full of their belongings. They paid respect to the local forest gods for their cooperation in

completing the *ygya* successfully. The birds and animals of the *siddh ashram* came out to bid farewell to Vishwamitr. The sage returned with due respect to the hermitage. On moving ahead when the day came close to end, they camped on the bank of the river shon. Ram being impressed by the prosperity of the area enquired more details about that.

### 1-32. Vishwamitr's forefather (26)

There was a saintly king Kush who was married to the princess of Vidarbha and was blessed with four sons: Kushamb, Kushanabh, Asurtrajas, and Vasu. On his command to be righteous in rule, his four sons established four cities Kaushabmi, Mahodaya, Dharmarany, and Girivrajam respectively.

Vishwamitr continued, "This place where we are now belonged to Vasu, and the river is called Maagadhi promoting the agricultural yield of this area and encircles the five high rise mountains of this area. Kushanabh was blessed with one hundred charming daughters. Once impressed by their beauty air-god sought directly with them to marry all of them and bestow divinity upon them. They refused saying that they would go by the decision of their father and not on their own. Feeling humiliated air-god caused them to lose their graceful physique. When those cursed girls came back home, father Kushnabh seeing their ugly form asked as to how all that happened."

### 1-33. Vishwamitr's forefather.....continued (26 )

Vishwamitr further continued, "Those girls narrated what had happened with air-god. The king patiently lauded their righteousness and pardoned air-god. Kushnabh began looking for a fit groom to marry them. There was an upright celibate sage Chuli who impressed by a maiden Somda blessed her with a brilliant son called Brahmdat who became also very righteous and famous. Brahmdat established his mighty kingdom at Kampilya. Kushnabh approached him to marry his hundred daughters and he agreed. When the marriage was being solemnized, by simple touch of hands of Brahmdat to those girls their deformities vanished and they got back their initial charm. Kushinabh was very happy and accorded them a warm send off with Brahmdat. The mother of Brahmdat, Somda was very happy to see one hundred daughter-in-laws and also with the power of his son who eliminated air-god's curse from those girls. "

### 1-34. Vishwamitr's forefather.....continued (23 )

Continuing the narration Vishwamitr said, "Kushinabh performed a son-blessing *ygya* for he had no son. His father Kush who was brain child of Brahma, predicted to him that he would be blessed with a righteous son and left for *brahmalok*. In course of time, Kushinabh got blessed with a son called Gaadhi."

Vishwamitr disclosed, "I am the son of Gaadhi. I have one elder sister called Styavati, who is married to the sage Richik, and she in her physical form got into heaven. However later for the benefits of the worldly people she transformed herself into the river called *Kaushiki* having genesis in the Himalayas. I used to stay in her vicinity in the Himalayas. It is for this vow, that for some time, I was away from her and got my *ygya* completed at *siddh ashram* with your cooperation."

Saying thus indicating the lapse of night almost to midnight, Vishwamitr asked Ram to take rest. All thereafter slept on the bank of the river Shon.

### 1-35. Story of the Ganga (24)

सुप्रभाता निशा राम पूर्वा संध्या प्रवर्तते ।

उत्तिष्ठ उत्तिष्ठ भद्रम् ते गमनाय अभिरोचय ॥ १-३५-२

Before the day break, Vishwamitr waked Ram (1-35-2) and advised to make preparations for further journey. After daily ritual they set out and after a half day travel they arrived near the river Ganga. After offering the day's oblations to fire, and taking mid day food, Ram requested the sage to narrate the legend about the Ganga. Vishwamitr narrated, "Himvan, the mountain chief, had two daughters from his wife, Mena, the daughter of Meru. The elder daughter was Ganga and the younger was Uma. On gods request Ganga was gifted to them and she was taken to heaven.

### 1-36. Uma's curse to gods and earth (27)

Ram further asked the sage as to how she got name of *tripathga*. On hearing him, the sage began the story first of Uma and Shiva. Shiva and Uma, immediately after their divine wedding, were engaged in yogic copulation and in this process over one hundred celestial years elapsed. Seeing no offspring coming out of the divine couple even after they maintained prolonged copulation, Gods became afraid that who would be able to endure the birth of an offspring after such a long period of copulation. Gods anticipating very unusual situation of Uma not able to bear the womb, approached Shiva and advised him to restrain from further copulation. Shiva responded positively, and he dropped his agitated semen over the earth which inundated the forests and mountains. Fire god with the help of wind god was able to absorb the flood which had taken a shape of huge white-mountain. This was used later for the birth of Kumar. Uma was angry over gods, because it was on gods' intervention that his consort discontinued the copulation. She cursed gods to remain issueless. Because the earth bore the semen, Uma cursed her also that she would have several husbands and her face would be disfigured by irregularity of mountains, rivers and oceans.

### 1-37. Birth of Kartikeya (32)

Gods lead by Indra prayed Brahma for a commander-in-chief of their army to fight out demons. They mentioned about the Uma-Shiva incident and her curse upon

them. Brahm justified her action and advised them to go to fire-god to use the Shiva's semen to impregnate Ganga, the elder sister of Uma. Fire-god, hearing the Brahma's command approached Ganga who readily consented to the proposal. She became pregnant but was unable to bear the heat of the radiant brilliance of the embryo which came originally from Shiva and got enhanced from the association of Fire-god. The embryo was then, on the consent of Fire-god, ejected in the forest of the Himalaya. Gods advised the star Krittika to feed the newly born baby. She did that and the newly born child grew into six heads to suckle milk from all the six entities of the Krittika. In one day he blossomed into full youth. All the gods lead by Fire-god arrived there and crowned him as the commander-in-chief of the gods' army. He was named variously Kumar, Kartikeya and Skanda. His name Skanda is because of "*skann*" which means "semen skipped", and Kartikeya because he was fed by Krittika in his infancy.

Vishwamitr concluded, "I have described thus to you the story of Ganga who gave birth to Kumar (*kumar sambhav, 1-37-31*) who is variously called Kartikeya and Skand. Those who become his devotee shall attain worldly pleasure of being blessed with sons, longevity and would reach his celestial abode upon death."

### 1-38. Sons of king Sagar (24)

Vishwamitr continued narrating, "O Ram, long back, in your dynasty, there was a king named Sagar. He had no issue. He had two wives, one named Keshini daughter of Vidarbha king, the other Sumati, daughter of Arishtnemi and sister of Garuda. The king undertook a great penance on one of the Himalyan mountains called Bhrigu Prvarshan. Pleased by his penance, sage Bhrigu blessed him to have one son from Keshini who will be the ancestor of the dynasty, and sixty thousand mighty and energetic sons from Sumati.

In course of time Keshini gave birth to a son who was named Asamanj. He picked up a peculiar habit of throwing the young children in the water of Saryu and enjoying their death by drowning. The king banished him out of his territory for the cruel nature of killing children. Later it his son Anshuman who became the glorious king in the dynasty.

Sumati delivered a large egg-shell which burst into sixty thousand tiny eggs and they after being quarantined in pitchers of *ghee*, brought fourth sixty thousand children; with the passage of time they all grew into strong and energetic princes.

After some time the king Sagar resolved to perform *ashwamedh ygya* and accordingly preparations commenced.

### 1-39. Auspicious horse stolen (26)

Ram being engrossed in the story of his forefathers, requested the sage to continue the details further. The sage narrated, "There are two large mountain ranges Himalaya (father-in-law of Shiva) and Vindhya; both peer each other. The venue of

*ygya* was selected on the ground between them. While Anshuman, the great charioteer and archer was guard of the auspicious horse, on the second day of the vedic ritual the auspicious horse was stolen by Indra disguised as a demon. The priests conducting the ritual exhorted the king to early retrieve the horse failing which the occurrence of inauspicious events would haunt all of us. Listening their command, the king urged his sixty thousand sons who were mighty ones to scour the earth and find out the horse. He also asked to share among them one squire *yojan* of earth to each so that sixty thousand square *yojan* of landmass was dug up simultaneously until the horse was located. The grandson of the king Sagar, Anshuman remained with him at the vedic venue. The multitude of princes finding no trace of horse over entire *Jambu dweep* began digging down the earth and continued moving to lower levels. This caused harm to several subterranean lives and their respective gods gathered around Brahma to relieve them from the action of those mighty princes.”

#### 1-40. Sagar’s sixty thousand sons burnt to ashes (30)

Brahma consoled them, “The lord and protector of earth is Vasudev and earth is divine consort of Madhav. These days he is in the form of Kapila meditating in the netherworld and his wrath would burn them to ashes.” On hearing from Brahma coming of their end soon all the thirty three gods bowing to Brahma came back fully relieved.

Those princes while digging the earth from all sides reached a common place where all gathered together. Since they didn’t find the horse after digging to that extent of the earth they went back to the king Sagar and intimated about not locating the horse even after digging the earth to its subterranean level. The enraged king commanded them to dig further and go to *rasatal* and locate the horse by hook or by crook. As commanded by his father they again resumed their digging further to *rasatal* (*rasatal* is one of the seven subterranean world in the order of depth from the earth surface : *atal*, *vital*, *sutal*, *talatal*, *rasatal*, *patal*). In this process they encountered Virupaksh, the mountain *dikpal* of the eastern side. In reverence they gave a round to Virupaksh *dikpal* and moved further.

यदा पर्वणि काकुत्स्थ विश्रमार्थम् महागजः ।

खेदात् चालयते शीर्षम् भूमि कम्पः तदा भवेत् ॥ १-४०-१५

It is said the earth quake (1-40-15) mostly happens because of movement in the eastern mountain *dikpal*. Scouring towards *rasatal* they went south and met Mahapadma mountain *dikpal*, and on moving towards west they got Saumanas mountain *dikpal*. On the northern side they met Bhadr *dikpal*, a snow mountain. Paying their respects to the *dikpal* they scoured north-east and reached the hermitage of Kapila. To their pleasant surprise they spotted the *ygya* horse grazing around. Holding the horse in their possession they suspected Kapila to be the culprit and addressing harsh words they rushed towards to him. The sage, to protect



himself against their attack, produced great nasal sound exhaling the breath(breathing out - *hunkar*), and all the mighty princes turned into the heaps of burnt ashes.

#### **1-41. Anshuman found the horse (26)**

Waiting for long time, the king Sagar asked his grandson, “Your uncles are not coming back, go with your bow and sword and find out the horse”. Anshuman found the route created by his uncles, and met on way the four *dikpal* whom when he saluted blessed his return soon with the horse. Moving further he could see the heaps of ashes and the horse grazing nearby. He wanted to offer the water oblation to his uncles but no water was available. In the meantime he saw the mount of Vishu, Garuda, the maternal uncle of his father. Garuda spoke to him, “Yours uncles have been victim of sage Kapila and they would only be emancipated by the holy water of Ganga, the elder daughter of Himvan. You go with the horse and let your father conclude the *ygya* and thereafter arrange to get Ganga to emancipate those prices.” Anshuman swiftly came back with the horse and narrated to his grandfather, the king Sagar what had happened and how Garuda had helped him. After concluding the *ygya*, the king thought much about the bringing of Ganga but he couldn’t and after thirty thousand years he left for heavenly abode.

#### **1-42. Brahma blessed Bhageerath (25)**

Anshuman living for thirty two thousand years departed for heaven. His son Dilip also lived for thirty two thousand years and went to heaven but couldn’t get Ganga down to earth. Bhageerath son of Dilip undertook a severe penance for thousands of years standing inside five-fires and Brahma appeared before him asking for boons. He sought two boons: (i) to get Ganga on earth for emancipation of his grand fathers, and (ii) for a child since he was issueless.” Brahma granted him two boons and advised him to pray Shiva to hold the thrust of Ganga falling from heaven for the earth was incapable of containing the mighty fall.

#### **1-43. Ganga descended (41)**

Bhageerath engaged for one year in deep penance pleased Shiva who received Ganga over his head. While coming down Ganga had a pride of sweeping away Shiva, who sensing her ego, arrested her in his endless hair locks for pretty long time. Again Bhageerath prayed Shiva and he dropped her in Bindu lake from there came out seven streams; three in the east: *ahladini*, *pavini*, *nalini*; three in the west: *suchakshu*, *seetha*, *sindhu*, and one behind Bhageerath in the south. On way the holy river absolved several sinners off their sins who moved to heaven. Thus gushing behind the chariot of Bhageerath she inundated the *ashram* of the sage Jahnu. Enraged sage, on her audacity, drank her away completely. On the request of gods and sages Jahnu released her from his ears, and thereafter she came to be known as *jahnavi*. Streaming behind Bhageerath, she reached the confluence of ocean from where down below in the netherworld, the Bhargeerath’s grandfathers ashes were lying. Her touch emancipated them to heaven.

**1-44. Water oblation by Bhageerath ( भगीरथ ) (23)**

While Bhageerath with Ganga was at the site of princes in ash, Brahma appeared and lauded Bhageerath for fetching Ganga to the earth. He advised him, "Take bath in the water and offer oblation to your parents. The deed which you performed could not be performed by any of your forefathers even if they were very capable. The credit goes to you only." Saying thus Brahma went away to his abode. Bhageerath also performing the rituals came back to his kingdom.

Vishwamitr concluded the legend about Ganga since evening had set in and it was time for *sandhya*. Before closing he mentioned that those who listen the legend of descent of Ganga would be blessed with his cherished desires in life.

**1-45. Ocean churning (samudra manthan) (45)**

Getting up next morning and on completion of the normal worship Ram expressed, "Lakshman and me spent the night like one moment reflecting the performance of Bhageerath fetching Ganga to this world." Later, they crossed the Ganga by boat brought by local hermits in honour of Vishwamitr. Arriving on the northern side of the Ganga they could spot a city called Vishala. Ram politely submitted to know the details about that city. Vishwamitr mentioned that it was inhabited by Indra. Story goes that Sage Kashyap had two wives Diti and Aditi. Both were daughters of Daksha. From Diti demons were born and from Aditi gods were born. Both demons and gods wanted to be immortal and for this they needed ambrosia. They began exploring the ambrosia and launched a joint venture of churning the ocean. One hundred and eight hooded snake's king, Vasuki was used as a stirring rope and mandrachal was the stirrer. After lapse of some years of churning, Vasuki getting fed up of friction of rotating the stirrer began vomiting deadly poison which created great havoc. Gods rushed to Shiva for help and Vishnu also appeared there at that time. He praised Shiva and advocated on behalf of gods to help them. Saying that he disappeared. Shiva helped them by consuming the poison. When the churning resumed the stirrer began sinking downward. On the request of gods, Vishnu in the form of a tortoise held the stirrer *mandrachal* in stable condition. He also held and pressed by his own hand the top of *mandrachal* to keep it stable. On years of churning Dhanvantri, the doyen of life science (*ayur ved*) appeared with dand (arm resting stick) and *kamandal* (cylindrical water pot) in his hands. Next, celestial girls came out of the churning. They were sixty million including their attendants. Some of them accepted to be consort of gods, and some accepted demons while others remained unallied to anyone. Then came out Varuni, the daughter of Varun who rejected by demons was accepted by gods. Varuni literally means liquor (*sura*), and since demons didn't accept her, they were named *asura*, and gods accepting her became *sura*. Further products coming out of the churning were *ucchaishrva* (horse), and *kaushtabha* (diamond) followed by ambrosia (*amrit*). For the possession of *amrit* both *sura* and *asura* began fighting which continued for hundreds of years. Vishnu appeared in the form of a charming woman, Mohini, and took the possession of *amrit*

as both of them surrendered before her majestic personality. Gods came out victorious in the war and Indra being their leader ruled over all the worlds.

#### 1-46. Indra tried to destroy Diti's womb (23)

In the war of gods and demons the loss was more on demons' side. Diti the mother of demons prayed her husband Kashyap to bless her with a son to kill Indra as he killed her several sons. Kashyap asked her to maintain one thousand years austerity if she wanted a son of her choice. She agreed and patting her Kashyap left for his penance. She then moved into the place called *kushplva* to undertake her austere penance for son. "That place *kushplva* is this Vishala city", said Vishwamitr to Ram. He continued the story further that Indra came to serve Diti. It was about ten years left that Diti revealed to Indra, "I have completed the vow and now only after ten years I would deliver a son who would be world winner. Indra, if you keep him in confidence, you two together can rule the universe." It so happened that during mid day, once she fell asleep while her head was on foot-side of the cot. Taking this opportunity as breach in her austerity, Indra entered her womb and began splitting the foetus into pieces by his multi-edged bolt. On being split the foetus began weeping bitterly on which Indra forbade them to weep and split them into seven pieces. Diti awoke and she began crying, "The foetus is not worthy of killing." Hearing that Indra dropped out of her womb holding blood stained bolt in his hand. He told her that since she breached austerity he split the foetus into pieces who was supposed to kill me in war field.

#### 1-47. More about Vishal city (22)

Diti accepted her lapse in the austerity and didn't find any fault with Indra. She asked him, "Let the seven of them be divine gods. As Indra told them in womb "*ma rud, ma rud*" which meant "don't weep.....", so they would be known by name *marud*. They all would be wind god and one of them would be positioned in Brahma lok, second one with you, the third one in the entire universe and the balance four shall rule the wind movement in four cardinal directions." Agreeing to her proposal both left this place for heavenly abode.

Vishamitra continued, "This place of austerity of Diti where Indra served her, was later occupied by the king Ikshavaku (other than solar dynasty of Ram) whose son from his wife Malubisha was called Vishal and he established this city. From Vishal came the lineage like this: Hemchandra, Suchandra, Dhumrasha, Srinjay, Sahdev, Kushasva, Soudatt, Kakutasth, and Sumati."

The sage told, "The last one Sumati is now the king of the city. We will stay here tonight and tomorrow we will go to see the king Janak." In the meantime, the king Sumati learnt about the arrival of Vishwamitr and he came to greet the sage.

**1-48. Legend of Ahlya (33)**

King Sumati after welcoming and offering his prayer to the sage Vishwamitr wanted to know about Ram and Lakshaman who prevailed upon his attention. Vishwamitr introduced them as sons of king Dasarath and they had come to help him perform *ygya* at *siddhashram* after killing the demons. Sumati accorded a warm royal welcome to Ram and Lakshaman.

Next day receiving warm send off Vishwamitr moved towards Mithila. On way, on the outer access to Mithila, they passed through a hermitage which was attractive but desolate. Ram enquired about that. Vishwamitr narrated, “Gautam and his wife Ahlya stayed here for meditation. Once Indra in the guise of Gautam entered the hermitage and requested Ahlya for copulation. Ahlya could realize that the disguised person was Indra but not her husband Gautam. She still consented and when Indra was coming out of the hermitage, Gautam arrived after river bath carrying *ygya* wood and grass in his hands and body wet with water. He could spot Indra and cursed him for assuming his form and copulating with his wife. By his curse, the testicles of Indra fell on the ground. The sage then cursed his wife Ahlya to remain there invisible smeared with dust remaining on air without food and water for a long period until Ram came to liberate her. Saying thus he went to Himalaya.”

**1-49. Ahlaya's emancipation (22)**

Indra appealed to fellow gods for he had lost his testicles due to curse of Gautam. The gods lead by fire-god went to the god of birth, Prajapati. He advised to transplant the testicle of sheep to Indra. Accordingly Indra got the testicles of sheep.

Vishwamitr advised Ram to enter the *ashram* and liberate her. When Ram entered the *ashram*, she became visible to both the brothers and they touched her feet in reverence. Realizing the end of her plight and advent of Ram, She rose and offered proper ritual respect by *arghya*, and *padya*. At the same time, Gautam also arrived there and became united with his wife and expressed his obligation to Ram for making his words true. Thereafter Vishwamitr moved towards Mithila.

**1-50. Janak greeted Vishwamitr (25)**

Vishwamitr accompanying Ram and Laskhamana reached the venue of *ygya* situated in north-east of Mithila. Seeing the venue Ram expressed his high impression where hundreds of Brahmins were engaged for the success of the vedic ritual. All of the *ygya* related priests were given due place of stay. Vishwamitr also selected one quiet place near water body for their stay. Janak heard about the arrival of Vishwamitr. He came with many priests lead by Shatanad to greet him. When the initial procedure of welcome was over and all were seated, Janak wanted to know about the two young charming persons Ram and Lakshaman accompanying the sage. Vishwamitr introduced, “They are the sons of king Dasarath. With their assistance I could perform my *ygya* and they killed the demons. On way they had

visited city of Vishal, and thereafter, emancipated Ahlya. They are here to have glimpse of the great bow of Shiva.”

**1-51. Shatanand elaborated on Vishwamitr ( 28)**

Shatanad being the eldest son of Gautam and Ahlya, praised Ram and Vishwamitr for showing grace on his mother. He continued to introduce in detail about Vishwamitr who fortunately blessed Ram with his ascetic potential. Shatanand continued, “The brain child of Prajapati was Kush whose son was Kushnabh. Gadhi was the son of Kushnabh and from Gadhi is born Vishwamtir. He ruled as a great king for thousands of years. Once while roaming around with his royal entourage he happened to sight the hermitage of Vashishtha which was a virtual new world where scores of ascetics viz., Balkhlya, Vaikhanas among many others were seen engaged in offering oblations into fire. The hermitage was a retiring friendly place for herds of animals, birds and other wild creatures forgetting their natural enmity. The place was full of varieties of fruits bearing trees. Nothing was seen wanting there.”

**1-52. Shatanand continued on Vishwamitr ( 23)**

Vashishth accorded proper welcome to the king Vishwamitr. When occupied their respective seats, they exchanged enquiries of welfare of each side. Vashishth offered initially fruits and water to treat his guest and requested further to stay at the hermitage and he would make all efforts to provide royal facilities. First Vishwamitr thanked him and asked for leave but when repeated for stay by Vashishth he accepted his invitation. Vashishth invoked the celestial cow Shabala to take proper care of the sage among kings, Vishwamitr and his royal entourage accompanying him.

**1-53. Shatanand continued .....Seeking of celestial cow (25)**

The entire entourage of Vishwamitr received due royal greetings and were highly satisfied by the hospitality of Vashishth. Vishwamitr spoke to Vashishth, “I including my ministers, army, royal ladies and armies are glad with your hospitability. I seek the transfer of this cow to me and in return I can give one million cows.” Vashishth didn’t agree for that barter and said, “This cow is my life. All my vedic practices are due to her. She is my *swaha*, *swasta*, *homa*, *japa* and all. I can’t spare her.” Vishwamitr again sought the cow and offered 14 thousand elephants, 800 chariots, 1100 horses, 10 million cows all duly decorated with gold and gems. He also offered to meet the unlimited demand for gold and gems in lieu of this cow. Vashishth very clearly denied sparing the cow at any cost.

**1-54. Shatanand continued.....Vishwamitr fought for the cow (23)**

Vishwamitr grabbed the cow forcibly. When the cow saw her being dragged by the royal forces she piteously looked to Vashishth and spoke as to why he deserted her. She freed herself from them and came running to Vashishth. Lying on his feet she asked, “What is my fault that you discarded me?” The sage replied, “No, nothing, no

fault of yours. It is the forceful act of Vishwamitr, he is dragging you away from me. I am helpless against the royal strength.” The cow reminded Vashishth, “The potential of a sage is unbeatable and he can’t win me from you.” Vashishth asked her to produce the forces to fight the royal army. The cow did that by her nasal sound and hundreds of *pahalva* forces came out and destroyed completely the army of Vishwamitr. Seeing that Vishwamitr became angry and taking that as a challenge defying his status he began charging his mighty missiles destroying the forces produced by the cow. The cow then produced ferocious *shaka* and *yavana* fully equipped to fight Vishwamitr. The king using his missiles scattered the newly created forces.

#### **1-55. Shatanand continued.....Vishwamitr took to penance (28)**

Again the cow brought forth the reinforcements from her various parts of the body varieties of warriors and that destroyed the royal army of Vishwamitr. Hundreds of sons of Vishwamitr rushed to Vashishth in retaliation. The nasal sound of the sage burnt them to ashes. Lost immensely at the hands of Vashishth, Vishwamitr offered the kingdom to his one surviving son and went to forest to please Shiva by his penance. When Shiva appeared and asked for boon, he asked for all weapons in possession of all sorts of creatures on the earth to come in his possession. Shiva granted him all. Vishwamitr came forth to the hermitage of Vashishth and used the rare weapons to destroy completely the hermitage. The birds, animals, priests and sages began running away from there. Although Vashishth asked the fleeing sages and ashram inhabitants to stay, it was in vain. Soon the hermitage of Vashishth became a desolated and deserted place. Enraged sage then took his ascetic rod in his hand which looked like the fire-ball of the ultimate end of time and universe.

#### **1-56. Shatanand continued .....Vishwamitr grounded (24)**

Vishwamitr used all sorts of missiles, shafts, tridents, *chakra* on Vashishth but all were absorbed by his ascetic rod. Lastly Vishwamitr charged *Brahma’s* missile and that too diffused in front of the sage. Vashishth body began glowing with radiance of his potency which was unbearable for the universe. Gods and sages prayed him to calm down. Vishwamitr condemned his fighting potentiality and surrendered before the radiance of an ascetic.

#### **1-57. Shatanand continued .....Trishanku met Vashishth (22)**

Vishwamitr went towards the southern side and under took a severe penance. Pleased with his penance, Brahma appeared and blessed him to be *raj-rishi* (king among sages). Vishwamitr was dejected since after such a hard penance he couldn’t win the title of *brahm-rishi* from Brahma, and again resumed his penance for the higher goal. In the meanwhile, a king of Ikshavaku dynasty, Trishanku, came to Vashishth and expressed his desire to perform such *ygya* or ritual which could bring him bodily to heaven. Vashishth denied fulfilling his wish, and whereupon Trishanku came to hundred sons of Vashishth engaged in penance and austerity. They too

couldn't help him, rather cursed him to become a *chandal*, a disgraceful social stigma.

**1-58. Shatanand continued .....Trishanku to Vishwamitr ( 24)**

Trishanku thus cursed by the sons of royal mentor came back to his capital. Next day he turned into a *chandal*, with all his cloths turned black. Seeing his transformation into unacceptable form of a *chandal*, his ministers and royal assistants deserted him. Trishanku didn't lose his heart. He came to Vishwamitr and narrated what had happened with him and he mentioned, "Luck is the supreme, nothing can prevail upon it. Although I performed several *ygya* and vedic rituals my desire of going bodily to heaven has brought upon me this status of a *chandal*."

**1-59. Shatanand continued .....Vishwamitr organized ygya (22)**

Vishwamitr sent his sons and disciples to invite sages including the sons of Vashishth. Sages began arriving. Some of the disciples who had gone to invite son of Vashishth, came back and spoke to Vishwamitr, "The sons of Vashishth has condemned this *ygya* where the head organizer is *kshatriya* and the host is *chandal*, Trishanku." Vishwamitr in anger hurled host of curses on them denouncing their mentality.

**1-60. Shatanand continued .....Trishanku pushed back from heaven (34)**

Vishwamitr addressed the sages who had gathered at his behest. When he mentioned that he wanted to perform a vedic ritual which could send Trishanku bodily to heaven, those sages became skeptical, but afraid of his curse agreed to act what he wanted. The *ygya* commenced, and when the share of various gods were offered invoking them to accept their oblation, none turned up. Enraged Vishwamitr didn't care gods not accepting his invocation, and using his ascetic power, pronounced *mantra* to send Trishanku to heaven. Trishanku rose and reached the realms of heaven but Indra threw him down from there since he was tainted with the curse of *chandal* from his mentors. Trishanku, upside down cried for help and Vishwamitr with his potential stopped him in space in the same condition upside down. Vishwamitr began creating parallel heaven by creating galaxy of stars, *saptrishi mandal* all in the southern hemisphere because north was occupied with the existing godly creation. Trishanku stayed there amidst newly created galaxy of stars by Vishwamitr. The ritual concluded and the invitees were bade farewell.

**1-61. Shatanand continued .....Ambrish in search of the ritual animal (24)**

Vishwamitr then left that southern direction and moved to western zone full of forests with lakes. He began his penance with light food of fruits on the side of one of the lakes. At the same time the king of Ayodhya, called Ambrish had commenced *ygya* and the *ygya* horse was stolen by Indra. He was not able to locate the horse. His priests steering the *ygya* told that in substitute any human being could also be used as ritual animal. Ambrish began the search for such a substitute. He reached

*Bhrugu-tung* a mountain top where the sage Richika was staying with his family. He sought the sage for selling one his sons as a substitute for ritual animal. (*Richika is husband of Satyvathi sister of Vishwamitr*). The sage spoke to Ambrish, "I can't share my eldest son." His wife spoke, "I can't share the youngest son, Shunak." The middle son, Sunahshep spoke, "Father can't share the eldest one, and the mother sticks to the youngest son. It means I am available." He agreed to go with the king Ambrish. The king offered lot of gold, gems, one hundred thousand cows to the sage and moved with Sunahshep towards his *ygya* venue.

#### 1-62. Shatanand continued .....Ambrish performed *ygya* (28)

While coming to the venue with Sunahshep, the king stopped on way for rest. Coincidentally, Vishwamitr was doing penance in the nearby. Sunahshep went to him and fell in his lap saying he was going as a ritual animal for the *ygya* of Ambrish. Vishwamitr asked his sons who were with him doing penance to go as substitute of Sunahshep because they were accomplished ones after doing so long penance. Madhusyand and his other sons replied collectively to him that for saving Sunahshep why did he want to sacrifice one of his sons. Vishwamitr became angry and cursed them that like sons of Vashishth they would fall in the cycle of birth and death and keep subsisting on the meat of dogs. He then gave two vedic hymns to Sunahshep which would provide him longevity. He spoke to Sunahshep, "When you are made ready and fixed to the Vishnu-post, recite these hymns." Sunahshep came to Ambrish and moved to the *ygya* place. When the *ygya* resumed and turn of Sunahshep came as a ritual animal, he recited those hymns taught by Vishwamitr. Indra hearing those hymns protected and blessed him for long life. Ambrish also got the fruits of the *ygya* by the grace of Indra. Vishwamitr continued his penance for another thousand years by remaining near the lakes.

#### 1-63. Shatanand continued .....Vishwamitr and Menaka (26)

When Vishwamitr completed the penance and took bath on the conclusion, gods appeared. Brahma addressed him as a great saint (*rishi bhadram*). He was not satisfied with this title. He continued his penance further. In the meanwhile one day he saw Menaka the celestial girl swimming in the lake. He was overwhelmed by her beauty and asked her to stay there. He was diverted with her and thus ten years rolled out. The sage realized this hindrance created by gods. He became repentant. Menaka stood before him with folded hands and he pardoned her and moved to the northern Himalaya for further penance.

On the bank of river Kaushaki he undertook the penance for one thousand years. Gods approached Brahma to bestow the title of *maharshi* on him. Brahma came to him with the gods and addressed him as *maharshi*, but he was not satisfied. He wanted to be addressed as *brahmishi*. Brahma told that for becoming *brahmishi* he was required to be really victor of senses. Saying thus Brahma left the place.



Vishwamitr undertook rigorous penance further by raising both his arms up and remaining only on air. He remained in fire in summer, in open sky in rains, in water in winter.

#### **1-64. Shatanand continued .....Rambha cursed (20)**

Afraid of Vishwamitr accomplishments Indra commissioned Rambha to interfere his penance. Initially she was afraid of the sage's ire, but Indra spoke to her, "I would accompany you as a sweet-word bird, and love-god would also be there in similar guise." Vishwamitr heard of sweet melodious chirping of birds. He then spotted Rambha in her charming physique. Immediately sensing the Indra's traps for him, he cursed Rambha to become mass of rock. When Rambha turned into rock, Indra and love god fled away from there. Vishwamitr realized his fault of getting prevailed upon by anger. He resolved to continue the penance for another one thousand years maintaining the state of breathlessness, until he attained the *brahmishi* title.

#### **1-65. Shatanand concluded.....Vishwamitr became *Brahmarishi* (40)**

Vishwamitr continued his vow of rigorous penance of keeping silence and breathlessness. It was end of one thousand years. He cooked his food and was about to eat that Indra disguised as a Brahmin came supplicating for food. He gave all to the Brahmin and again resumed his penance for another stint of observing complete rigors.

The fumes and radiance sprang forth from his head. Gods were feared. Physical world was affected by this extraordinary development. The gods gathered before Brahma and narrated the developments taking place due to Vishwamitr's penance. Brahma arrived near Vishwamitr and addressed him as Brahmrishi. Vishwamitr with folded hands expressed his obligation to Brahma but sought his blessing for being accepted as *brahmishi* by the great sage Vashishth also. Gods invoked Vashishth and he addressed Vishwamitr as *brahmishi*. Both patched up their old bitterness and became friends.

Shatanand concluded the legend on Vishwamitr mentioning, "He is an ace ascetic full of fortitude and rectitude. Ram and Lakshaman luckily got a great guide." King Janak offered his due reverence to Vishwamitr and expressed, "I am fortunate that my *ygya* has been graced by such a great sage." He giving rounds of Vishwamitr took his leave to see him tomorrow morning as the evening had already set in. Vishwamitr with Ram and Lakshaman came to the place of stay.

#### **1-66. Shiva's bow shown to Ram (26)**

Next day morning completing the daily rites Vishwamitr with Ram and Lakshaman met Janak. Janak asked what was command of the sage for him. The sage advised the king to show them the Shiva's bow. Before they were taken to see the bow, Janak narrated the story. He mentioned, "Shiva was furious when his share was not placed in the *ygya* of Daksha. Shiva stretched this bow and cautioned gods that he

was going to split their heads for the fault of ignoring his share of oblation in the ygya. On begging of pardon, Shiva forgave them and he gave this bow to gods. Gods in turn handed over the bow to one of my forefathers, Devarat.”

After ploughing the field I got a daughter, called Sita. I wanted to marry her with the one possessed of unique valour. Several kings came to give their test of valour by way of lifting this bow. None could do that. In anguish they got united against me and laid a siege of my city a year ago. With the help of celestial army I could scatter them. Janak continued, “If Ram strings this bow, I would offer my daughter to him.”

#### **1-67. Ram and the Shiva’s bow (27)**

Janak commanded the ministers to bring the bow which was smeared with paste of sandal and wrapped in garland. Five thousand tall persons pulled the eight wheeled casket containing the bow from the palace chamber to the court hall. Janak indicated to Vishwamitr that the bow might be shown to the princes.

On the initiative of Vishwamitr Ram moved forward and upon lifting the lid of the casket had a glance of the bow. He inquisitively asked the permission to get a touch of the bow by his hand and take out to feel its divinity. Both Janak and Vishwamitr consented simultaneously, “All right.”

He pulled out the bow holding from its centre in the presence of thousands of people in the hall. When after fixing he stretched the string the bow broke from its centre with a loud deafening sound as if the earth had split due to quaking mountains. Except Vishwamitr, Janak and the two brothers, others were swooned by the sound. Janak was very happy by this incident, and he immediately made a proposal for sending his ministers to Ayodhya to bring the king for solemnizing the marriage of Sita with Ram. Vishwamitr consented and soon the royal messengers left for Ayodhya to apprise the king Dasarath with the entire development in detail and invite him to Mithila for marriage of Ram and Sita.

#### **1-68. Dasarath invitaded (19)**

The royal messengers of Mithila riding the chariots spent three nights en route before they entered Ayodhya. Welcoming them, they were brought before the elderly king Dasarath in his court. They narrated the eventful happening of Ram breaking the bow of Shiva for which the king Janak had vowed that he would marry his daughter who could be of valour to string the bow. They narrated, “Several kings in the past couldn’t even pull out the bow out of the casket. They collectively, after their failure, charged a siege of Mithila which the king Janak dealt successfully. The marriage proposal of Sita to Ram by king Janak has been sanctified by Shatanand and endorsed by Vishwamitr. Kindly accept the invitation and leave for Mithila with your royal preceptor, ministers and well wishers at the earliest to solemnize the marriage under your care.”

King Dasarath was happy to learn about the presence of his two sons under care of sage Vishwamitr at Mithila. He immediately consulted Vamdeva and Vashishth and the ministers. They welcome the proposal and the king announced to set out for Mithila tomorrow morning. The messengers received royal treatment and spent their night awaiting the break of auspicious dawn.

#### 1-69. Dasarath arrived in Mithila (19)

The king summoned Sumantr, his counselor, and asked him to arrange expeditiously adequate gold, gem etc to be distributed at Janakpur and the consignment must move before we move. He asked, "The chariots of Vashsith, Vamdev, Jabali, Kashyap, Markadeya and other venerable priests shall procede my chariot. All four types of army contingent shall accompany the procession." Accordingly the king set out for Mithila and arrived there in four days. King Janak heard their arrival and came forward on the outskirt to receive them. They were warmly ushered in Mithila. Janaka proposed, "Tomorrow let the sages decide the date and time of marriage which should be solemnized at the earliest within three four days." The king Dasarath consented to his proposal. The coming together of saints and sages at Mithila was very enjoying to them. Vishwamitr leding Ram and Lakshaman came to see the king Dasarath who was glad to see his two sons when they touched his feet. Happily, they retired for night's rest.

Janak performed several vedic rituals for the upcoming events for his two daughters (सुताभ्याम् 1-69-19) and thereafter satisfactorily went to sleep.

#### 1-70. Pre-wedding preparations, forefathers of Dasarath (45)

In the morning, the king Janak spoke to the royal priest Shatanand, "My brother, Kushadhwaj, staying at Sankasya is surrounded by the river Ikshumati. The floating lotus around the city gives an impression as if city is riding a *pushpak viaman*. He is performer of the ongoing vedic *ygya*, and he will also extend help in the wedding ceremony. Let him be informed by a messenger to come here immediately." Shatadand called a messenger who on the command of Janak went fast to Sanksya. On hearing the message, Kshdhwaj immediately arrived at Mithila. Both the brothers then after interacting between themselves sent Sudaaman, the wise minister of Mithila to invite the king Dasarath with Vashishth and other sages.

As commanded by Janak, Sudaman, came to submit the message to Dasarath. Immediately Dasarath with Vashishth and other sages arrived at the Janak's place. Dasarath initiated, "Vashishth is the royal priest and preceptor of Ikshavaku family, and he will introduce about my forefathers in presence of the sages." Vishwamitr consented to his proposal by nodding.

Vashishth narrated the family tree thus, "The sequence is like this: Brahma, Marichi, Kashyap, Vivasvaan (the sun), Manu, Ikshavaaku, Kukshi, Vikushi, Baan, Anrnya, Prithu, Trishanku, Dhundhimaar, Yuvanaashwa, Asit, Mandhaataa, and Susandhi.

Susandhi had got two sons Dhruvasandhi and Presenjiti. Bharat was born from Dhruvasandhi and his son was Asit. The foreign tribes of Haihaya and Taljanga, attacked over Asit and dethroned him. The king Asit, exiled in forest, breathed his last while his two wives were pregnant in the forest. One queen by jealousy gave poison to the other queen, the co-wife of the departed king, but the sage Chyavan who was staying in the nearby hermitage saved her and assured that the poison would do no harm to the child in the womb. When the child was born from her he was called Sagar (स + गर which means with poison; refer 1-38 for more details). While being reared up under the sage Chyavan, the child Sagar learnt all about the archery and other warfare skills besides the scriptures. He learnt in course of time about the dethronement of his father and winning over the enemies he restored the kingdom of his father in his possession. Further lineage coming from Sagar: Asamanj, Anuman, Dilip, Bhageerath, Kakutstha, Raghu, Pravridha (his another name was Kalmashpaad and due to curse of Vashishth he had become a demon staying on the human flesh), Sankhan, Sudarshan, Agnivarman, Shighrag, Maru, Prashruk, Ambreesh, Nahush, Yayati, Naabhaag, Aj, Dasarath. From Dasarath is these two brothers Ram and Lakshman who are quite matching to be married to the daughters of Janak. “

#### 1-71. Janak enumerated his forefathers (24)

After listening Vashishth, Janak, as a customary practice of the wedding, put a cursory description of his forefathers. His forefathers enlisted by him is in the order: “ Nimi, Mithi, Janak, Udavas, Nandivardhan, Suketu, Devarat, Brihadra, Mahavir, Sudhriti, Dhritketu, Haryasva, Maru, Pratindhak, Kirtirath, Devamidh, Bibudha, Mahidhrak, Kirtiraata, Mahaaroma, Swarnroma, and Hrisvaroma.” Janak continued, “ I and Kushadhwaj are the sons of Hrisvaroma. My father crowning me as the king, and handing over my younger brother Kushadhwaj to me, went to forest.

Once Sudhanva asked me to handover the bow of Shiva and Sita to him. When I refused he attacked and he was killed in the battlefield. Thereafter, I crowned Kushadhwaj as the king of Sudhanva's Sankasya.

Janak confirming the wedding to be held mentioned, “ I offer my daughter to Ram, and Urmila to Lakshman. Today is Magha *nakshatra*, and on the third day in the period of Uttar Phalguni, I propose the marriage to be solemnized.”

#### 1-72. Vishwamitr proposed the marriage of daughters of Kushadhwaj (25)

On conclusion of Janak's submission, Vishwamitr mentioned to Janak, “Both the royal houses of Ikshvaku and Nimi are great. It is auspicious that they now shall have the marriage relationship. I also propose that Kushidhwaj has two daughters and let them be married with Bharat and Shatrughn.” This was consented by Vashishth. Janak readily agreed to the proposal. Dasarath praising the two sages, proposed to proceed with necessary rituals in this regard. Being lead by two sages,

he left for his place of stay. In the morning of the other day, as a preparatory ritual to the upcoming wedding, he donated besides huge sum of wealth, thousands of well decorated cows to Brahmins and sages.

### **1-73. The Wedding (40)**

In the morning when the king Dasarath had performed liberal donations, there arrived Yudhaajit, the prince of Kekaya region, and maternal uncle of Bharat. Dasarath welcoming him asked the welfare of his father and relatives. Yudhaajit spoke, "My father wanted to see Bharat. I came to Ayodhya to take him to Kekaya desh. I learnt about their marriage here in Mithila, and I came here."

The king Dasarath after staying that day with joy, spent the night. The morning of the wedding day arrived and he with his entourage moved to the ritual hall and advised Vashishth to enquire about the status of wedding solemnization. Vashishth coming to the marriage hall enquired from the king Janak about the preparations. Janak informed him, "Everything is ready. My daughters have already arrived at the fire quarters. I welcome you all here now with the bridegrooms." When Vashishth informed the king Dasarath about the preparations, with all his four sons and keeping the sages in the forefront Dasarath arrived at the wedding venue. Vashishth in presence of fire in the fire quarters, sanctified all the ritual articles and varieties of pots with grass, rice and water.

Janak brought Sita fully bejeweled in royal clothes. Ram with four brothers were also dressed up well with all sorts of jewels and clothes. Janak offered the hand of Sita to Ram mentioning, "She is your wife and would remain with you like your shadow." He offered her to Ram with the recitation of hymns and pouring of water in their joined palms. Similarly he handed over the hands of Urmila to Lakshaman, Mandavi to Bharat, Shrutkriti to Shatrughn. All the four pairs gave three rounds (1-73-39) to the sacred fire. Gods showered flowers and the melodious sound of divine music permeated throughout the period of wedding.

Sages lead the procession with Dasarath and the four pairs arrived with them to the place of stay. The king's eyes had no saturation of the auspicious sights of the four pairs, and he kept gazing at them.

### **1-74. Prashuram (24)**

Next day early in the morning, Vishwamitr took leave of the king and moved out to the north. The king Dasarath also took leave of Janak and set out for Ayodhya. While giving farewell to his daughters Janak gifted them with huge wealth of gems, gold, silver and precious items. Thousands of cows, horses, elephants, chariots and several other valuable items were gifted.

On way Dasarath noticed birds creating loud noise around him, while the animals were running on his right. He enquired from Vashishth whether auspiciousness

would be maintained on way. Vashishth explained, "Birds indicate some disturbance, while the animals annul the bad omens and prevalence of auspiciousness." In the meanwhile there arrived Prashuram with lightening brilliance holding *pharsa* (double arched sharp steel weapon with a handle) in his right hand, while his left hand held the bow and arrow. Sages began offering prayer to him with respectful ritual of water (*arghya*, and *padya*). While the sages doubted, "Whether he would again resume his previous action of killing *kshatriya*" , Prashuram moved to Ram.

**1-75. Prashuram .....continued (28)**

He told to Ram, " I have heard about your potential and performances, including the breaking of Shiva's bow among the several others. As a further test case, the bow I am holding is of Vishnu, and I give it to you for stringing it and shooting the shaft." King Dasarath, desperately interfered with his polite submission to Prashuram, "My son is yet like a child. You had given words to Indra not to kill *kshatriya* any more. Besides after killing the *kshatriya* several times you have already gifted the earth to Kashyap, and taken ultimate refuge to the mount Mahendra. Have pity on my son."

Prashuram ignoring the Dasarath's intervention continued, "The celestial smith, Viswkarma had prepared two bows. Gods gave one to Shiva and the

other to Vishnu. Shiva used the bow to kill the demon Tripura. Gods gathered at Brahma's place and wanted to know who was mightier, Shiva or Vishnu. Brahma to quell their query for ever scripted a drama between Shiva and Vishnu causing them to fight. Both of them presented an excellent fight and in doing so when Vishnu produced a nasal sound, the third eye of Shiva got frozen. He surrendered and Vishnu became victorious. Shiva gifted his bow to the king of Vidheh, Devarat. Vishnu also gifted his bow to Jamdagni, son of the sage Richika. Jamdagni being my father, I got this bow. My father had quit using the weapons, and finding him alone meditating Kritvirya Arjun, beheaded him. In retaliation I cleared this earth several times of the race of *kshatriya*. Now I invite you to take this Vishnu bow and perform as I told you to do."

**1-76. Prashuram.....continued (24)**

Ram praised Prashuram for paying the debt of killing of his father by eliminating *kshatriya* kings. He took that bow having a shaft on its string. He pulled the string and asked Prashuram where to shoot the shaft. Further he asked, " Either it will destroy your mind-speed movement ability or your treasure of penance. " Prashuram recalled the command of Kaashyap, "When I gifted the earth to Kaashyap, he asked me not to stay at night on earth. Since then I travel to mount Mahendra at night." Considering his ability of movement not to be damaged, he asked Ram to charge the arrow to destroy his treasure of penance. He offered

his prayer to Ram saying, "You are unparallel in the entire creation, the absolute Narayan Himself. No one can excel against you."

Gods had gathered in the sky to watch this event. Ram observing his desire shot the shaft to devoid him of his potential of penance. In front of the presence of gods, Prashuram gave round to Ram and vanished in thin air for Mahendra mount.

#### **1-77. Arriving back to Ayodhya (29)**

When Prashuram was gone, Ram addressed his father to issue command to the army to proceed towards Ayodhya. Dasarath kissed the forehead of his son, Ram as if he had got a gift of life from the anger of Prashuram. Soon they reached Ayodhya where warm welcome awaited them. All the streets were kept moist, decorated with urban style, strewn with arches and flowers. The king entered his palace and enjoyed the inner gathering of three quins Kaushlya, Kaikeyi and Sumitra amidst the four pair of brides and bride- grooms. The women folk greeted the newly-wed brides with due customary practices.

King Dasarath advised Bharat to go with Yudhaajit to his maternal uncle's place since he had come to take him there. Bharat took Shatrughn as his companion and seeking the leave from father, Ram, and three mothers left for Kekaya.

Ram and Lakshaman assisted their father in his royal duties. They earned the love of darling from the people of Ayodhya as two brothers had always protected the interest of the people of state.

The relation between Sita and Ram, day by day, grew deeper and deeper. They remained the heart of each other.

Srimate Ramanujay namah**Preface**

Ramayan is a Sanskrit word and its literal meaning can be understood in several ways. Some of the relevant ones are: (i) the scripture which is abode of Lord Ram, (ii) the scripture as store house of glory of Lord Ram, (iii) the scripture which describes the movement of Lord Ram.

The submission now is the second one following the first one of *Baal kaand*. This covers the condensed glory described by the sage Valmiki in *Ayodhyaa kaand*. The description mainly covers the movement of Ram in forest to honour the words of his father. His father, king Dasarath had given two boons to one of his queens Kaikeyi when she had extended courageous assistance to the king in the battle field of demons versus gods. When Dasarath made preparations for crowning the eldest son Ram as successor prince, Kaikeyi claimed<sup>1</sup> her unrealized boons, and she wanted (i) her son Bharat to be crowned, and (ii) Ram to be exiled in forest for fourteen years. With heavy heart the king had to honour the claims, and Ram happily cooperated with his father in accepting forest life. Accordingly Ram left for forest joined by his wife Sita ,and brother Lakshaman.

Bharat was totally unaware of his mother's claims, and he was away to his maternal uncle's place. The king didn't bear the shock of separation of Ram, and he departed to heavenly abode in absence of all his four sons. When Bharat came back to Ayodhya, having rejected the mother's proposal, and after performing the last rites of his father, he left for forest to pursue Ram to come back to Ayodhya as king. Ram didn't oblige him, and maintaining his firm resolve he stayed in forest.

*Ayodhyaa kaand* thus initially describes in detail total developments taken place leading to banishment of Ram. The later part in major portion covers the details of developments taking place during his maiden movement to forest. Someone can prefer to call this part as *nirvaasan kaand* (banishment section) but as christened by Valmiki, all subsequent celebrated authors of Ramayan have retained the Valmiki's title, of *Ayodhyaa kaand*.

This *kaand* is second of six / seven *kaand* of Ramayan and has 119 chapters (*sarg*). The following condensed version is retained in the same sequence followed by the sage Valmiki. The first digit in parentheses is the number of *shlok* in a given *sarg*, and the second digit is the cumulative summation of *shlok* including the given *sarg*.

*Baal kand* had total 77 *sarg* containing 2266 *shlok*, whereas *Ayodhyaa kaand* has 119 *sarg* with total *shlok* 4310. Total cumulative *shlok* of *Baalkaand* and *Ayodhyaa kaand* is 6576. The spelling of "*Baal kaand*" and "*Ayodhyaa kaand*" in the preface is to facilitate correct prevalent pronunciation. However, in the following text simple spelling retaining only single "a" instead of double "aa" has been maintained.

**Srimann Narayan Charnau Sharnam Prapaddye. (श्रीमन्नारायण चरणौ शरणम् प्रपदे )**

Submission:

Srikrishna Prapnnachari

Dhanurmas, January 11, 2010

<sup>1</sup> In *sarg* 107 *shlok* 3, Ram also revealed that besides two boons, Dasarath had married Kaikeyi pledging the kingdom to her son.



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Srimate Ramanujaya namah

## Ayodhyaa kaand

(119 sarg)

### 2-1 Dasarath invited elite (50 / 50)

Bharat and Shatrughn were conspicuous by their absence in Ayodhya. Although they were enjoying the warmth of stay at his maternal uncle's place (Kekayadesh), sometimes they used to miss the elderly father, the king Dasarath. While reflecting upon the four sons, the king also felt isolated for he thought Bharat and Shatrughn to be like mighty gods Indra and Varun, and there were away from home. His source of enjoyment used to whirl around the eldest son Ram, and the impression he carried about him is, "He is impeccable, valorous and gem among the human beings. He is never found to be angry with any person he interacts. His words are always balanced and soft and he is never found to be provoked in any situation. His command on archery and scriptural knowledge is fully acknowledged by everyone." Musing thus he believed, "Ram is self created incarnation of the almighty Vishnu (2-1-6 / 7)."

*Note: At this stage the sage Valmiki fully reveals that Ram is no other than almighty Himself, and this is evident from the two referred shlok of this sarg extracted here below. The common notion that Valmiki never portrayed Ram as almighty appears to be baseless if one takes a look at these shlok as there could be no more direct expression than this that almighty Himself incarnated as Ram.*

तेषामपि महातेजा रामो रतिकरः पितुः ।

स्वयम्भूरिव भूतानां बभूव गुणवत्तरः ॥ २-१-६

स हि देवै रुदीर्णस्य रावणस्य वधार्थिभिः ।

अर्थितो मानुषे लोके जज्ञे विष्णुः सनातनः ॥ २-१-७

Dasarath thought, "If he could see sooner the mantle of the statehood over Ram's head he would feel very much satisfied in the evening of his life." He felt so much excited in transforming his will into reality that he sent forth the invitation to elites of his kingdom, his well wishers and relatives to seek their consensus on this issue. While doing this he couldn't invite the king of Kekaya and Mithila taking them to be for granted gracing the forthcoming coronation function.

### 2-2 Ram to be successor prince (54 / 104)

The invitees gathered in the assemble court in presence of Dasarath. The king addressed them, "I have been carrying the kingly mantle of the house of Ikshavaku for a long time. Having been gripped by old age, I seek retirement now and wish to make Ram as my successor. I seek your consent in this regard." The consent was unanimous and unequivocal as several of them expressed their views, "Ram is full of righteousness, morality and valorous courage. He is knowledgeable and commands the respect of the citizens by virtue of his rare qualities to respect everyone. His performances are well known to all of us. He is like the supreme among gods."

### 2-3 Direction for coronation arrangements (49 / 153)

The king honoured the consent of the elite gathering with folded hands. The winsome and happy king submitted to Vashishath, Vamdev and other Brahmins, “ This month *Chaitra* is known for its auspiciousness as blooming flowers keep the forest and earth beautiful with colorful buddies. Let the coronation arrangements be made henceforth.” The king’s announcement received welcome applause of the assembly. Vashishath immediately directed the courtiers and officers, “All arrangements be made to collect ample gold, gem, rice, *ghee*, honey, flowers, herbs, sacred water, garlands, white fans, umbrellas, hundreds of golden pitchers, auspicious elephant, bull having decorated horns, full tiger skin. Full four contingents of army be brought ready near the *ygyashala* (oblation square) by the dawn time. The city squares be decorated with scented flowers, royal routes be kept moist and scented. The royal place as well as all thresholds of city’s dwellings be anointed with sandal paste and attractive decorations of flags, flowers and auspicious plants. Appropriate materials in ample amount viz/, rice, milk, honey, curd etc. be collected at squares where Brahmins will perform religious invocations (*swasthi vachan*) for the general well being. The first line of the royal premises be occupied with valorous well equipped warriors. The musicians and performers be placed in the second premises lines.” Vashishath and Vamdev after commanding the arrangements to be made intimated the king accordingly.

On the direction of the king Dasarath, Sumantr brought Ram in chariot. As Ram arrived and stepped up to the king, the gathering from various regions of the kingdom: east, west, south, north, *maleccha*, hills and forests, everyone present got the rare opportunity to enjoy the pleasure of the occasion. Rare aura of handsomeness around Ram immersed all the attentions. When Ram offered his salutation to the king’s feet and honoured the assembly’s ovation, he got a seat. Dasarath spoke to him, “You are elder son from my eldest queen Kausalya. In the *pushya nakshatra* (moon in conjunction with *pushya* asterism) your coronation as successor prince has been scheduled. You yourself possess all the qualities of gem of a human being. You are polite and reciprocate well with others. Still as a friendly advice you keep them up with still further politeness. By all means direct or indirect you need to keep your ministers and all others happy and well satisfied. As the celestial beings become happy by ambrosia, you need to keep your sate happy with coffers full and granaries brimming to the top.”

In the meanwhile the news of coronation of Ram reached Kausalya and she became very liberal with the precious gifts to the visitors. Dasarath announced the dispersal and Ram offering salutation to the king went back on chariot. The citizens also moved to their place and offered respectful offerings to their favorite deities for the forthcoming auspicious event.

### 2-4 Ram at his mother Kausalya’s palace (45 / 198)

Dasarath entered his inner palace and advised Sumantr to bring Ram again to him. Sumantr immediately obeyed the command and Ram came prostrating to the king. Dasarath embracing Ram spoke to him, “I have lived long and have fulfilled all my wishes to my satisfaction. By offering oblations and performing *ygya* I have met my duties to the gods (*deva rina* – divine obligations). Studying *veda* and religious scriptures I could attend to responsibilities due to the sages (*rishi rina*, saintly obligations). By begetting sons like you I have met the *pitru rina* (ancestral obligations). Now my only duty left is to coronate you as a successor prince. For quite some time I could

experience bad omens, and dreams of comets striking the earth. Astrologers have indicated that *rahu*, *surya* (sun), and *mangal* (mars) are approaching my natal *nakshatra* (asterism) which may portend loss of life. Persons passion change, and therefore I have decided that as on today the moon is passing through *punarvasu*, and tomorrow in *pushya* your coronation shall be performed. I know Bharat is not present, and I trust his affection and honour to you. But I don't want to delay as things keep on changing. From this moment until tomorrow's coronation you with Sita need to maintain fast and sleep on the grass mat." Hearing his command Ram offered his salutation and came back to his palace and moved further to the palace of his mother Kausalya.

When he reached there, he found her in deep meditation sitting near the deity, lord Vishnu. Sumitra and Lakshaman getting the news had gathered at Kausalya's place earlier before Sita could reach there. Although Kausalya was in meditation, Ram getting nearer to her broke the news and father's command. She opened her joyous and tearful eyes and responded by invoking god's blessing on him.

Ram, addressed Lakshaman, "For you I am accepting the rulership of earth being entrusted by father." Speaking thus with affection to him he came back to his palace.

## 2-5 Vashishath initiated Ram to resolve for fast (26 /224)

On the request of Dasarath, family priest Vashishath arrived at Ram's palace riding a chariot. Ram himself received the priest and assisted him in getting down the chariot. When settled in his palace, the priest initiated by reciting the appropriate mantra of the religious ritual for Ram with Sita to resolve to keep fast on the eve of ensuing coronation. When the ritual was completed, Ram honoured the priest and thereafter soon he left his palace. By this time, bee line of friends and well wishers had begun thronging the Ram's palace congratulating him to become the successor prince tomorrow. Meandering through the crowd Vashishath came back to the king and informed him about the completion of the ritual of resolve by Ram and Sita. Happily, Dasarath paying due respect to Vashishath, took his leave and entered inner palace where preparations for tomorrow's function had fast picked up.

## 2-6 Festivity until dawn (26 / 250)

Ram engaged himself in worshipping and meditating Narayan. He offered *ghee*, atop the burning flames, as oblation in fire in the name of Narayan. Upon completion of oblation he took the balance *ghee*. He slept on a grass (*kush*) and was awake well in time so that he was ready about three hours before the sunrise completing his morning *sandhya* and worship. All over Ayodhya the vedic recitation created a pleasing environment throughout the night. The squares and crossings had spots of gathering of people coming from all quarters of the country hearing about the ensuing morning coronation of Ram. They felt lucky to have a view of the forthcoming ceremony. The streets and squares were decorated with light trees (2-6-18) as if night had no place in Ayodhya and a warm welcome awaited the auspicious dawn.

प्रकाशकरणार्घ च निशागमनशङ्कया ।

दीपवृक्षां स्तथाचक्रु रनुत्थ्यसु सर्वशः ॥ २-६-१८

**2-7 Manthra's move (36 / 286)**

Manthra had been a maid since Kaikeyi's birth and continued doing so after she was married to Dasarath and shifted to Ayodhya from Kaikeydesh. That night, by coincidence, Manthra came out to roof top and was surprised to see the decorations of the city and spotted Kausalya distributing gifts to the visitors. She learnt from the neighbor's maid that celebration was in the coming morning when Ram would be crowned as a successor prince to the king. She was shocked and instantly rushed down to Kaikeyi who was relaxing on her bed. She burst upon Kaikeyi, "O ill lucked woman! How do you sleep so unaware of the impending calamity to you and your lineage ? Coming morning Ram is going to be crowned as a prince. The king is so cunning that after sending Bharat out he hastily hatched a plan to crown Ram." Hearing the good news of Ram being crowned as prince, Kaikeyi got up joyously and immediately gave a precious gift to her saying, "Ram and Bharat are same and she doesn't discriminate between the two. There can't be better news than this."

**2-8 Cunning *kubja* (39 / 325)**

Manthra had a hunchback and so she was called *kubja* also. She returned back the jewel given to her in gift and spoke with great remorse, "You have lost your sense of discrimination who is well wisher and who is your enemy. You will serve as maid to Kausalya, and your daughter in law would stand folded hands to Ram's wife. This is the only chance to claim the crown otherwise your claim to be closer to the king would prove false. Lakshaman and Shatrughn are younger in consideration of Bharat so their claim would never arise, but Bharat's claim must be placed to the king. "

Hearing her plea Kaikeyi pleaded, " Ram is a learned person, great warrior, polite and well behaved, and therefore his coronation is fully justified. He deserves the crown in all respects as the citizens, elders and parents all trust his worthiness. Bharat enjoys full affection of Ram, and I believe in one hundred years Ram on his own would make him the ruler. Where is the question of Bharat being kept away to become the controller of the reign."

Kubja rejecting her pleas again spoke, " You need to understand its future implication also. By this coronation, not only Bharat but his sons would also be debarred from the royal crown. The son of the king will have claim and not the others. You had your known rivalry with Kausalya, and she will teach you lesson once her son comes in command. Ram is closer to Lakshaman, and so is Lakshaman to Ram. Both would protect each other. In this process they would prefer to eliminate Bharat. From childhood Bharat had spent more time with maternal uncle and therefore he had lesser opportunity to impress the king and the result is obvious today that he has been discarded for the crown. Now, I propose, that after tomorrow Bharat should better go to forest instead of coming back to Ayodhya, otherwise he may be eliminated by Ram. O, Kaikeyi, I once again caution you to make all efforts to claim crown for Bharat and send his obstacle Ram to exile."

**2-9 Kaikeyi in catch (66 / 391)**

Hearing the words of Kaikeyi, Kubja became very angry and taking a deep breath in anger, she spoke, "I shall now send Ram to exile and crown Bharat as the prince." Hearing her assertive words Kaikeyi wondered as to how she would achieve that. Kubja peeping into the wavering mind of Kaikeyi reminded her, "There was a fierce battle in the

city of Vaijyant, lying in the forest area of Dandka, between demons and gods; the king Dasarath was fighting from gods' side. The demon, Timidhwaj also called Shambra had grievously injured Dasarath. During that period you were accompanying the king in the battle field and you saved the life of the king twice against the demons afflictions. The king, later unconditionally offered you to seek any two rewards of your choice, and respecting the king's affections you deferred that for the future. O, Kaikeyi, here is the time for the realization of those two boons."

Thus Kubja advised Kaikeyi to seek, " Send Ram to exile for fourteen years, and crown Bharat as the prince." Her plea was that by keeping Ram in exile for fourteen years, Bharat would get enough time to get his strong foothold in Ayodhya and also befriend the citizens in his favour. To realize the boons she advised her to enter the anger-house (*kopa bhawan*) in soiled cloths discarding all the jewels. She added, "When king comes, never look to his face, keep weeping. He loves you so much that to please you he would even risk to jump into fire. Don't accept any barter with any amount of precious gifts, except realizing two boons of exile to Ram for fourteen years and crown to Bharat."

Kaikeyi was amazed to hear the Kubja's machinations and applauding her talent, and muscular physique (*she was beautiful except the hunchback*), promised to bejewel her foot to head once she realized her boons from the king. Prompted by Kubja, she entered the anger house with a wrathful face having soiled cloths on her body.

## **2-10 King with Kaikeyi (40 / 431)**

After lying down on the dirty floor of the anger house, she discarded all her jewels littering them here and there on the floor. In the meanwhile, after the king felt the satisfaction of arrangements being made for the coming occasion, he entered his inner palace. He moved straight to Kaikeyi's palace which was amidst a beautiful open garden having all sorts of flower, fruit bearing trees, lovely sit out places full with the provision of all sorts of drinks. The pet birds were chirping songs. He wanted to give a surprise to the queen by breaking the good news as if she was unaware of the coronation ceremony. To his surprise, he couldn't see the queen on her usual couch. The lady on the door intimated the confinement of the queen in the anger house. He paced inside and found her lying on the floor. Touching her body he enquired as to why she was there. He continued, "Who has caused this state to you ? Tell me, I would take immediate action. You know the globe from east to west, and south to north encompassing Sindhu, Sauveer, Saurashtra, Vang, Ang, Magadh, Matsya, Kashi, Kosal and others are under my reign. I promise what you wish, I can make a poor full of riches, and can devoid an unruly rich to the state of a pauper."

## **2-11 Kaikeyi claimed boons (29 / 460)**

Hearing his tall promises, the queen Kaikeyi broke her silence mentioning nobody had caused any insult to her. She asked the king to be firm then only she would place her demands. The king swore by the name of Ram saying, "You know I can sacrifice everything for you, and Ram being the dearest person to me, I firmly swear by his name to deliver your demand." Kaikeyi continued, " Let the fire, sun, moon, stars, invisible celestials, family 's deity all be witness to what king has promised to deliver." When the king reiterated to uphold what he said, she revealed her claims, "O, King! Kindly recall the scene of the battlefield between demons and gods, where you were fighting on gods side and had been seriously injured by Shamabr. Getting pleased with my service in



saving your life, I was promised two boons. Now I claim those two boons, “First, the arrangements being made for coronation tomorrow should be utilized for crowning Bharat and not Ram. Second, Ram shall be exiled to forest in the garb of an ascetic for fourteen years. If both of my boons are not met, I would better die than to witness tomorrow’s coronation of Ram.”

## **2-12 Dasarath in dilemma (114 / 574)**

The demands were so harsh and cunningly designed that king got a severe shock and became unconscious. When he gained his senses, he uttered, “O, cruel one, you are bent upon to destroy the family. I got a snake in the guise of my wife. What harm Ram had caused to you ! There is on one who dislikes Ram. The earth can sustain without sun, crops can live without water but I can’t bear his separation. It is you who have been praising Ram, even better than Bharat, and now today it is utterly unbelievable, seeing you turning around against him. I pray with my folded hands, I even touch your feet that don’t have ill will against Ram.”

Kaikeyi reproached the king, “Why do you claim to love me, when you can’t uphold your words. Recall the incident of Shibi who offered his flesh to save a pigeon. Another is example of Alark, who offered his eyes to the blind Brahmins. You are at your royal liberty to take back your words. I won’t survive for a moment if my boons are turned down. I would not take the deadly poison before your eyes.”

The king couldn’t believe her words, and fell like a dead log. After sometime when he regained his consciousness he tried to bring her around by recounting, “I fail to imagine how Bharat will accept this coronation by sending Ram to exile. He would never do that. What the world would have an impression about me, that in the trap of the lust of a woman I spoiled my family. What answer, shall I give to Kausalya and Sumitra when they would call upon me. How shall I bear the pangs of Sita whose husband shall be in exile? I firmly believe that Ram would never hesitate to go to forest once he hears about this. Well, it seems now my end is imminent. Turning widow you would enjoy this state with your son. If Bharat accepts crown sending Ram to exile let him be debarred from performing my last rites (2-12-93).”

The king continued speaking aloud, “How cruel are women! But what I mean applies to mother of Bharat only and not to other women. My Ram who had been served royal food prepared by expert cook, how would he eat the bitter wild food! How can I bear the scene of seeing Ram in an ascetics ochre ! Let there be myriads of faults in the earth in which you may disappear, but I won’t honour your words. I try again, I pray you to withdraw your lethal demand.”

## **2-13 Lamenting king (26 / 600)**

All pleas of Dasarath fell on the deaf ear of the queen Kaikeyi and she retorted, “Why do you boast of your truthfulness? I would never withdraw my claim.” Angry king spoke to her, “Cruel and sinner woman! Sending Ram to exile you want to see me dying. What shall I answer in heaven when they ask me about Ram? Better I die now, which could at least save me from earning bad name of sending Ram to exile. After so much of efforts on old age, I got blessed with sons, what a pity to my fate! “

While king continued lamenting, the day ended (2-13-15) with the advent of

sun set. King wished various options to help him out, "I pray, there should never be dawn, so that Ram is not sent to forest at all. Let there be instant dawn now to avoid seeing Kaikeyi's face any more." Wailing and crying he passed through several periods of unconsciousness. When conscious he began praising Kaikeyi, "Well natured, good hearted lady! you will never send Ram to exile. Save him, he had been dearer to you than Bharat."

Seeing her unrelenting with repeat of harsh words again, he fell on the floor in swoon. The night was coming to its end with indications of coming of dawn while bards and singers commenced waking up welcome note for the king.

## 2-14 Knotty Kaikeyi (68 / 668)

Seeing the king on floor she addressed him, "You are silent as if you are not aware of my claims. Be truthful to your words, and grant my prayer, otherwise say that I am not your wife and I would end my life before your eyes. I again repeat my claims three times." Hearing her, the king remorsefully spoke, "It is now almost morning, and auspicious materials for the coronation of Ram have arrived. Elders would be waiting for me. If you still obstruct his coronation, I disown my pledge to wedding fire (2-14-14) of continuing with you as wife. I disown you, and your son together. After my death, legitimate tribute of water offered by Ram would only be acceptable to me."

Kaikeyi interrupted angrily and asked the king to call Ram. The king caught in awkward situation also expressed his wish to see his eldest son, Ram.

With the break of the dawn, Vashishath and other priests entered the royal area of the city to commence the coronation in time. Seeing Sumantr, Vashishath advised him to inform the king of his arrival and also readiness of all the auspicious materials, "water from the *ganga* and sea, *udumbra* wood, seeds of grains, fragrances, gems and jewels, *laja* (paddy's pop corn), honey (*sharkara*), curd, *ghee*, grass, flower, milk, eight virgin girls, elephant with flowing natural fluid from its head, chariot with four horses, special sword, bow, palanquin with carriers, brilliant white royal umbrella, *chawar* (for fanning), water pot of gold, bull with sizeable hump, lion with four canine teeth, *simhasan* (throne flanked by lions' statue), tiger skin, fire with sacred timber *samidha* (ignitor), musical instruments, women singers, dancers, *brahmins* (priests), *acharya* (teachers), auspicious birds and deer." He advised him to inform that elite citizens have gathered with their followers to welcome and celebrate the coronation ceremony.

Sumantr came to the inner palace and because of his status went straight to the king, without facing any formal interference from the door keepers. With folded hands he submitted mildly to the king, "The holy night has passed out with the break of the dawn. Allow me to inform you about the preparedness already made and if anything is balance direct me to do that. Vashishath with priests have arrived and all ceremonial materials are at hand. Elite and excited citizen have arrived."

The words of Sumantr were although very soothing to the king's ears, while lying on the floor, remorsefully he opened his red eyes and advised Sumantr not to hurt him further. Hearing this, Sumantr, in awe, back tracked a few steps away from the king. Kaikeyi came forward and spoke to Sumantr, "The king couldn't sleep and whole night was concerned about the coronation. His wish is to bring Ram immediately here."

Sumantr paced fast steering through the crowd collected for the ceremony towards Ram's palace.

**2-15 Ceremonial scene (49 / 717)**

On way he had a visual delight of preparedness. People from all walks of life have gathered. The occurrence of auspicious period of *pushya nakshatra* and *kark lagna* (natal zodiac sign of Ram) have been marked with the rising sun (**2-15-4**).

Kings from various territories who wanted to convey their arrival to Dasarath spoke to passing Sumantr, "The auspicious moments have arrived. We have helped in making all necessary preparations for the ceremony. The king Dasarath should have been here, but why we don't see him yet." Sumantr informed them, "The king is awake and with his order I am going to bring Ram to him. However, I would convey your message to the king."

Saying thus he came back to the inner royal palace which always had barred entry. Getting on the threshold of the king's chamber, he submitted with due respect to Dasarath the message of invited kings waiting for him outside. Dasarath painfully spoke to Sumantr, "Why did you come back without Ram ? Kaikeyi had also asked you to do that. I am awake and go and bring Ram soon here."

Sumantr riding his chariot immediately rushed to the Ram's palace and could see on way side the waves of crowd and celebrities gathered for the coronation ceremony. From all quarters the sound of pleasing *vedic* recitations had permeated the scene. The avenues were decorated with colorful festoons and banners. Thus enjoying the extent of preparedness he entered Ram's palace which was fully decorated for the special occasion. All around varieties of birds were chirping atop the green trees beautifying the inner court of the palace. Inside the attendants were fully alert. Maids including several hunchback among them were found attending inside the inner palace.

(Note: **2-15-40** suggests that engagement of several hunchback maids were customary inside the palace. Similar reference has been found in *sarg* - 9, when Kaikeyi got impressed with the plot suggested by Manthra (also called *kubja* due to her hunchback), and she expressed her wishes that Manthra would receive the respect of all the hunchback maids **2-9-52**.)

**2-16 Ram on call to Dasarath (47 / 764)**

Sumantr was greeted by the guards at Ram's palace. On Sumantr's request intimation was sent to Ram about his arrival to see him. When Ram learnt about his arrival he asked the guard to bring him inside. When Sumantr entered inside, he saw Ram on a golden couch and on his side Sita was present as if moon was accompanied by *chitra nakshatra* (**2-16-10**).

(Note:

- ✓ *chitra* has been mentioned (2-16-10) with a special intention here, and it needs some astrological study. Normally moon with *rohini* is quoted because of *brishabha rashi* being the sign of exalted house for moon and *rohini* pertains to *brishabha* sign.
- ✓ Another quotation in 2-16-9 is of comparing the fragrance used by Ram with that of the fragrance of boar's blood as translated by several publishers, but this is not proper. This is strange, and needs etymological review as well as consideration of physical context where it has been used. Simple word meaning causes harm to the established cultural and religious ethics. In fact this word means the fragrance of red rose. )

When salutation by Sumantr and greeting by Ram was over, Sumantr intimated Ram, "The king wants to see you immediately in the palace of Kaikeyi." Ram taking leave from Sita immediately moved to Kaikeyi's palace riding his chariot whereupon Lakshman

was present in the rear part holding the umbrella over Ram's head. On way Ram answered warmly the people's ovations. Multitude of horses, chariots, elephants carrying the invitees followed Ram's chariot on way.

### **2-17 Ram passed through crowd (22 / 786)**

His chariot passed through the royal avenue full of banners and flags hoisting atop the buildings. The jubilant crowd welcoming him cleared the way for smooth passage of his chariot. He saw several junctions duly decorated with customary auspicious materials curd, colored rice, green leaves etc., and scented with fragrant incenses. Leaving the royal avenue he passed through three enclosures of the royal premises riding the chariot. All the enclosures had barred entry protected with bow men and soldiers. The last two enclosures before entering the Kaikeyi's palace he had to move on foot.

### **2-18 Kaikeyi acquainted Ram with her claims (41 / 827)**

When he entered her chamber he saw the king on a couch flanked by Kaikeyi but the father's face was pale and sorrowful. He saluted his feet and then the feet of Kaikeyi. Seeing him Dasarath exclaimed with deep sight, "Ram !." He couldn't speak further any more and was immersed in deep agony. Looking to him Ram thought, "What mistake I have committed that the father doesn't look to me nor speak to me. It is quite unusual, and never before I had experience such treatment from the father." He spoke out, "O, Father, What wrong have I committed which made you apathetic towards me." When he found his all pleas to father not being responded, he looked to Kaikeyi and praying her asked, "What wrong have I committed that enraged my father to this extent ?

Kaikeyi interrupted, "Ram, king is not angry with you, nor have you committed any wrong. The king like an ordinary man doesn't want to stick to his words, and therefore he is not coming out before you." When Ram requested to elaborate, she repeated the story of her protecting the king in the past in the battle of demons and gods, and in turn earning two boons to her. She continued, "I had deferred those boons for the future, and now I claim them: first, coronation to Bharat and not to you, and second, fourteen years exile to you in Dandak from today itself in the dress of an ascetic with braided hair." She exhorted Ram, "Help to realize my claims, and liberate him from the sin of not keeping up his words."

### **2-19 Ram honoured the claims ( 40 / 867)**

Ram assured Kaikeyi, "I would immediately move to the forest, but why the king doesn't speak to me as earlier. I also advise sending for Bharat immediately by dispatching fast footed horses to his maternal uncle's place. For Bharat I would sacrifice everything and I would be proud of Bharat becoming the prince." He continued with Kaikeyi, "For Bharat's coronation you need not have asked the king, rather you would have commanded me. But it seems you won't trust me, therefore you didn't ask me to step aside for Bharat."

Kaikeyi was glad to hear Ram's assurances and asked him time and again to quickly move to the forest. She also mentioned, "The absence of king's words to you reflects his deep affection to you and he doesn't want to pronounce exile to you." The king Dasarath hearing the discourses sighed deeply, "what a calamity !" and fell in swoon. Ram held him up to bring back his consciousness. Kaikeyi spoke to Ram, "Until you leave for the forest, the king will neither take bath nor eat anything, therefore you need to be quick."

Ram mentioned, “ On way to forest right from here I would surely visit my mother and console Sita.” Saying thus, he circumambulated the king and Kaikeyi and offering his salutations to them, he moved out of the palace followed by angry and silence swollen Lakshaman. His calm remained totally composed emitting his divine smile. He met on way his well wishers and kept passing with smile. He deserted chariot, umbrella and other formalities. On way he circumambulated the auspicious materials collected for the ceremony and offered his respect to them. Moving further he entered his mother's palace where pleasure of the ceremony to be performed was on its peak.

## 2-20 Kausalya shocked ( 55 / 922)

When Ram left the palace of Kaikeyi, women (invitee consorts of the other kings) inside began wailing and crying against Ram being exiled. They cried loudly, “Even if the king himself didn't ask Ram to go to Danadak, he responded with responsibility of an able son, and having quit the claim for the throne in favour of Bharat proceeding to forest.” By this time Ram entered the palace of his mother where he paid respects to waiting elder Brahmins and others in the outer three enclosures. Arriving in the innermost enclosure of his mother's palace, he could see her performing worship to lord Vishnu as she was doing sacrificial oblations to the fire. Seeing Ram coming she moved forward and greeted him. When Ram touched her feet, she took him up and embracing close her chest she smelt his head. She took Ram close to her place of worship and offered a seat. Ram while taking the seat broke the news, “Mother, Bharat would now be crowned, and I am moving to Dandak as an ascetic staying on roots and fruits for fourteen years. I came to seek your permission.”

No sooner she heard these words than she fell on the ground in swoon. Ram lifted her back to consciousness. She began crying, “Throughout my palace life, I have sustained the bitterness of Kaikeyi. Now when I was to enjoy the fruit of being mother of an elder son, I have been rejected by the king. It would have been much better to remain barren and my sorrow would have been limited to not having a son. This torture is really unbearable. But what can I do, the death also doesn't visit me. I have waited for seventeen years (2-20-45) after your investiture ceremony of the sacred thread only to hear this news of sending you to forest. When Bharat would come in command, I understand well, no one would enquire my welfare. I would also follow you and remain with you in Dandak.”

## 2-21 Efforts of Ram to pacify Lakshaman and console Kausalya (63 / 985)

Hearing queen Kausalya lamenting, Lakshman broke his silence, “O, mother, I also don't agree what Ram is doing. The old man has lost his orientation, and under passion for a woman he has banished his ablest son.”

Turning to Ram he said, “When I am by your side, you need not worry about any sort of resistance. Before others come to know about the development, let us seize the kingdom by force. Entire Ayodhya from the side of Bharat shall be annihilated alone by me and we would retain the prosperous kingdom with us. If your father, doesn't behave due to a woman, I shall not only imprison him but would eliminate him forever. What reason or strength he has got to snatch the kingdom from you.”

Again addressing Kausalya he assured her, “If Ram goes to forest or risks his life in fire, I shall do that before he comes into action.” Lamenting and weeping Kausalya, picking up from Lakshaman spoke to Ram, “Listen what Lakshaman is saying, and act immediately. Don't leave me alone lamenting. Kasyapa had ascended to heaven only

because of his service to mother. If you respect your father, I am also your mother and you need to honour my words and take care of me. I would keep fast unto death and that would make you responsible like ocean had to face when it ignored the penance of a Brahmin.”

Ram submitted to his mother, “ I am bound to obey the command of father and without violating that I have to go to forest. We are all aware about the sage Kandu who killed a cow at the instance of his father. Even in our own dynasty, to honour father’s command, sixty thousand sons of Sagar sacrificed their lives. Example of killing by Prashuram of his mother Renuka due to father Jamdagni’s command is universally known. Hence I seek your humble permission to allow me to follow his command. It is because of his words to Kaikeyi, she asked me to go to forest.”

Turning towards Lakshaman, Ram pacified him, “I understand your affection to me and I am familiar with your proven valour. It is not proper to show discourtesy to our father. We need to establish righteousness because ultimate triumph goes in favour of righteous persons.

Turning to Kausalya and bowing low, he sought her permission swearing her especially in the name of his own life. She didn’t heed to his swearing and rising again with extraordinary strength, reminded him of his duty to his mother also. Ram tried to bring her around and reminded that including her it was the responsibility of Sita, Lakshaman and Sumitra to honour the words of the king.

Ram continued, “Lakshaman, you favour mother, ignoring my untold misery of violating the father’s words. It is duty of mother Kausalya not to leave Ayodhya so long as her venerable husband is alive.”

Ram had a firm resolve to honour father’s words and making a circumambulatory salutation to mother Kausalya, again sought her blessings to allow him to move to forest.

## **2-22 Destiny prevailed (30 / 1015)**

Coming closer to Lakshaman, Ram tried to bring him around whose red eyes were shining with anger. He advised him for immediate stopping of the continuing preparations of the ceremony. Further he analyzed the development of the events which could happen as predetermined by the destiny. Continuing further he mentioned, “Kaikeyi’s sudden interference is only because of destiny. She is not at fault at all. Because it is the demand of the destiny, please stop the ensuing function immediately. To keep Kaikeyi cool and assured I want to immediately proceed to forest. This will enhance the honour of our venerable father also.”

## **2-23 Lakshaman rejected destiny (41 / 1056)**

Lakshaman was still simmering with anger and his facial expressions indicated his disagreement with Ram. He couldn’t restrain and spoke, “I don’t take this as simple. Both Dasarath and Kaikeyi had a long term plan for this, otherwise why the boons were deferred so long. As regards destiny, I have potential to change it. I advise you to take your position for the coronation, and I would see if anything comes on way including all the forces of the assembled kings. The bow, arrow, and sword are not decorative pieces, I know their function well.” Listening Lakshaman boiling to the brim, Ram tried to

compose him and reminded him, "I know only righteous path is that to honour the words of father. "

### **2-24 Kausalya relented (38 / 1094)**

Kausalya could see the firm resolve of Ram to proceed to forest. She tried to impress Ram to take her along in the forest. Ram didn't agree to her proposal and submitted very politely, " Mother, so long as the king is alive he is the commander of all of us. How can I take you with me ? If a woman doesn't worship nor offer any flower nor take up fire oblation in the name of any gods, but is steadfast in her service and respect to her husband she is considered pious and sacred and enjoys the respect of all others including gods."

Ram's words enlightened her, and she agreed for his departure and wished to see him back safe so that she would be able to rejoice his return after the specified period.

### **2-25 Kausalya invoked blessings (47 / 1141)**

Ram was determined to go to forest, and mother Kausalya shunning her grief outwardly commenced performing religious rites to invoke blessings on him. She sipped water from her palm and purified herself before taking up the rites. On doing necessary oblations in fire, she expressed her wishes, "Ram, depart now, follow the righteousness, and comeback safely. The righteousness shall be your protector shield. Your strong discipline in observing full respect to father and mother would keep you in safe situation. The sages, temples and foresters on your way shall provide you protection. The arms offered by Vishwamitra shall protect you. The animals, rivers, trees, plants, bushes, creatures of forest may protect you. May celestials *sadhya*, *visvadev*, *pusha*, *bhag*, and *aryama* keep you safe. The supreme god and creator (Brahma) be kind on you. The in-charge of hours, days, fortnights, seasons, weather, and *varsha* (year) protect you. The gods Skand, Som (moon), Brihaspati, and sage chief Narad guide you safely."

She continued her invoking of auspicious protection from Shiv, Surya (sun), Varun (sea god), Indr, Vayu (wind), and Yam. She didn't forget to seek protection from demons, serpents, and other deadly dangers. The natural geo-mass of forests, sea, hills and mountains were invoked to protect Ram.

She invited the venerable priests and Brahmins to perform fire oblation to wish and bless Ram in his safe journey to forest and timely return to Ayodhya. They blessed Ram by reciting the auspicious texts followed by showering auspicious materials rice, flower, mustard and sacred water over him. She offered precious gifts to all priests and Brahmins. She was not satisfied and continued to invoke, "Similar safety which Vinita had wished to her son Garuda while he was to carry nectar; Aditi had blessed Indr before facing Vritrasur."

"The greatness of Lord Trivikram while he measured the universe, be upon you" , She mentioned specifically. Though, from inside she was in deep agony, but maintained smiling countenance and to shield him with her personal protective wishes, she went around him clockwise. She embraced him closely and showered all her good wishes lowering his head to his nostril to take a deep smell of his head. While leaving Ram took hold of her sacred feet to seek her blessings and moved towards Sita's palace.

**2-26 Ram reached Sita (38 / 1179)**

Leaving mother's palace and passing through waiting crowd Ram having head low entered his palace. Sita was waiting for his arrival on completing her personal religious offering to god. When she saw him coming she went forward to welcome him but anxiety soon gripped her when she found his face a little sad. She enquired, "I see you a little perturbed. You are not endowed with the ritual decorations of honey and curd over your head. White umbrella with hundred ribs, white chowries, leading auspicious elephant do not accompanying you. I am afraid if everything is fine."

Breaking his silence Ram spoke to her, "The king has decided to send me to forest for fourteen years and instead crown Bharat as prince. This has happened because of long pending boons to Kaikeyi which the king is obliged to fulfill."

He continued, "I am on way to forest and dropped in here to see you only. Remaining here, you would continue your offer and worship to god without break with due salutation to the king every day. Never try to applaud my qualities in front of Bharat as that might hurt the person in command of the kingdom. All the mothers had reared me up with affection, and remain compliant to them. Take particular care of Kausalya who is getting weak due to my departure to forest."

**2-27 Sita submitted to accompany Ram (23 / 1202)**

Sita got a little concerned when she learnt her to be in Ayodhya. With eloquence she submitted to Ram, "Wife is the fortune of husband, and therefore I need to be with you. Husband is everything father, mother, son, friends and what not for a wife. Being with you in forest, I would strive to remove the thorns away from your route. I would remain on wild roots and fruits and would always be happy in the realm of mountains, rivers, and all difficult terrain full of monkeys, wild animals, and dangerous creatures. In your separation even heaven is of no worth to me. With you in forest I would enjoy the life as if I were at my parents' abode."

**2-28 Ram counted forest constraints (26 / 1228)**

Ram hadn't thought of taking Sita to forest. He began enlisting one after another the hardships encountered in forest life. He mentioned, "Routes are thorny. Terrain is tough. Rivers and mountains are full of dreadful creatures. Flying objects (mosquitoes, flies) are dangerous and harmful. Continued sustenance on fruits and roots is difficult to maintain. Monkeys and other dangerous animals roam about freely. It is not advisable to be with me in forest, and better you remain here with full righteousness."

**2-29 Sita firm for forest ( 24 / 1252)**

She discarded one after another the pleas given by Ram against forest life, "For a married woman the pleasure is to remain with husband, and sorrow is when she is separated. In your presence I don't see any dreadful scene of the forest. I also recall the prediction of a Brahmin who reading the signs over me had foretold that I would be stay in forest. At one more occasion, a woman soothsayer, had foretold to my mother about my impending forest life. I see those things coming true now. If you don't take me with you, I would end my life either in water, fire or take poison. Take me with you, and I would share all your pains and pleasure there together."



**2-30 Ram relented and Sita to accompany ( 47 / 1299)**

Sita was adamant and she further forcefully placed her claim to accompany the husband. She mentioned, "Why are you afraid of me in following you in the forest ? I am surprised whether in the physique of a man why do you demonstrate the weakness of a woman? My heaven is there where you are present. The thorns and sharp gravels on way would be like cotton cushion if I am with you. In your absence even one moment is sorrowful, and how shall I bear with the period of ten years plus three years plus one year (2-30-21) i.e., 14 years altogether. In any case I am not going to stay alive in your absence; I would take poison and seek immediate death than to wait for someone else's command." Placing her claim firmly, she caught hold of Ram and began weeping.

Note: Shlok 2-30-21 gives the breakup of 14 years = 10 yrs + 3 yrs + 1 yr. This indicates the category of upcoming events broadly characterizing the future in three distinguishable periods. It is said Ram stayed for about 10 yrs in Chitrakoot, 3 yrs in Dandkaranya, and last 1 yr was culmination of occurrence of most deciding events serving the purpose of advent of Ram to forest.

Ram had to relent on her state and he spoke, "I know that you are adamant to be with me. Without knowing your views how could I have asked you to come to forest. Now it is clear your abode is in forest with me. Come, don't worry, we will together live in the forest.

But before you move, give generous gifts to Brahmins and the poor waiting here outside. As advised Sita immediately distributed the garments and valuables among the Brahmins and poor people.

**2-31 Adamant Lakshaman (35 / 1334)**

Lakshaman had entered Sita's palace and had heard the conversation between Sita and Ram. When he saw Ram had agreed to take Sita to forest, he also moved forward to Ram and holding his feet in his hands prayed for permission for him to accompany them in forest. Ram didn't agree to which Lakshaman enquired, "I was earlier permitted to accompany you, what has happened that now I am being debarred to go with you. Why, what is the reason ?."

Ram told him, "In our absence Kaikeyi the daughter of Aswapti (2-31-13), might be more strict to co-wives Kausalya and Sumitra, and Baharat would concentrate more on his mother Kaikeyi. They, therefore, need you." Lakshaman didn't agree and mentioned, "Mother Kausalya has thousand villages in her control and she can provide succor to several thousand persons like me. She would take care of Sumiitra as well. Don't ask me to stay back. In forest I would find and arrange all convenient routes for you. Obtaining food, water, flower etc would be my responsibility."

Looking to his firm resolve, Ram asked to go and bid farewell to your friends. He also asked him, "In the ygay at Janakapur of king Janak, Varun the sea god, had personally offered mighty celestial bow, everlasting quiver full of arrows, two swords. These are lying at guru Vashishath's place. Go and get them."

Lakshaman immediately brought those arms and on way he bade farewell to his friends as well. Ram again asked him, "I want to dispose jewelries and my other precious possession to learned and austere Brahmins. Invite Suyagy, the son of Vashishath and others."

**2-32 Ram gifted precious charity (44 / 1378)**

Lakshaman obeyed Ram and went to Suygya's house of fire where he used to offer oblation. He spoke to Suyagy, "Friend, come and see Ram's palace." Suyagy immediately followed Lakshaman. Ram saw him coming and along with Sita went forward with folded hands to greet him who was well versed in *veda*. Together with Sita, as a mark of respect, he gave a clockwise round of Suyagy and worshipped him by offering varieties of precious jewelries. Sita offered special gifts for his wife. Ram offered him an elegant elephant, called Satrujaya which he had got from his maternal uncle, along with several more elephants. Suyagy with his wife showered blessing upon Ram and his wife.

Ram indicated to Lakshaman, "See those two learned Brahmins, Agastya and Kaushika are there. Give them fabulous gifts of cows, gems and cloths." He spotted another Brahmin and said, "See he is studying *Taittiriya* (branch of *Yajurved*) and is a favorite of Kausalya. Give him as much wealth, garments and as many cows until he feels satisfied."

Ram then located Chitrarath, a friend and charioteer of his father, Dasarath, standing for long in the crowd. He asked Lakshaman to gift him generously as much he wanted.

He also indicated towards some students in the crowd who were studying *katha* and *kalaap* and asked Lakshaman to honour them with fabulous gifts of their choice.

He saw several Brahmin students standing near Kasuhlya, satisfy them with varieties of gifts to bring pleasure to mother Kausalya.

Thus as directed Lakshaman offered gifts to Brahmins, poor and deprived as desired by Ram.

Ram could see the domestic attendants with tearful eyes. He gifted them fabulously and asked them to look after his place as well as that of Lakshaman until he returned from exile.

A Brahmin called Trijata used to carry axe, spade and plough and was doing digging of soil in forest. His wife had many children and they were afflicted by poverty. He was advised by his wife to go immediately to Ram's palace and get some gifts. Trijata in loin cloth came to Ram crossing five enclosures of the palace and spoke to him, "I carry out soil digging in forest and I am poor." Ram in good humor asked him, "Throw your staff and collect all the cows within boundary of the distance from here to the place where your staff drops down on ground." Trijata threw the shaft with his utmost strength which fell on the other bank of Saryu. As offered by Ram, he gathered all the innumerable cows upto the bank of Saryu where his staff had fallen. Ram again asked him for something more he wanted and asked him not to mind playing humour with him. Trijata was satisfied and blessing Ram he went home with his wife.

Ram gifted valuables to innumerable Brahmins and poor and no one remained there without receiving gifts.

**2-33 Ram moved to see Dasarath (on way to forest) (31 / 1409)**

Sita, Ram and Lakshaman moved out on the avenues on foot to see Dasarath on way to forest. Sita had tied the arms to her garland. People thronged the streets, and perched

over the building tops to have a look of royal trio. They were surprised over the development and proving Dasarath guilty of sending the ablest of men to forest. They expressed their wish to desert Ayodhya and stay with Ram in forest. Passing through them Ram arrived at the king's palace where Sumantr was found outside. Ram requested Sumantr to inform king of his arrival. People were sad but Ram maintained unruffled calm and smiling face standing outside waiting for a call to see Dasarath.

### **2-34 Ram met Dasarath ( 61 / 1470)**

Sumantr entered the king's chamber with folded hands and addressing the king with respectful salutations submitted, "Ram with Sita and Lakshaman are waiting to see you. Ram has gifted his valuable possession to Brahmins and attendants. They are on way to forest and came to seek you blessings." Dasarath, although grief stricken, asked Sumantr to call all his wives first and then bring Ram inside. Immediately Sumantr informed all the queens about the desire of the king to see them at Kaikeyi's palace. They all arrived. Kausalya surrounded by three hundred fifty women (2-34-13) arrived slowly there. After their arrival, Ram with Sit and Lakshaman were taken in.

When Dasarath saw them coming he rose from his couch and rushed to Ram, but before reaching he fainted and fell on the ground. While others were crying, Ram, Sita and Lakshaman gave their hands to raise him and bring back to his couch. When he regained his consciousness, Ram spoke, "We are here for your permission to forest. I forbade Sita and Lakshaman but they are adamant to stay with me in forest."

Dasarath intervened, "Ram, I was supefied by Kaikeyi. You don't go to forest, rather put me to confinement and take control of the kingdom." Ram didn't agree to that and expressed his resolve to honor his words given to Kaikeyi, "This sovereign state is now set for Bharat to rule. I would come back after fourteen years and bless me to complete my resolve."

Dasarath praising his firmness to follow righteousness mentioned, " Don't leave today, stay for tonight and leave tomorrow morning." Ram politely submitted not to do that because he had already assured Kaikeyi to leave immediately. Saying this when he moved to touch his feet, the king embraced him but soon he fell fainted without any movement in his body. Sumantr also fainted on the sideways. The queens except Kaikeyi began crying and lamenting loudly.

### **2-35 Kaikeyi didn't oblige Sumantr ( 37 / 1507)**

Sumantr couldn't restrain and exhorted Kaikeyi to use her wisdom and save the family from being ruined. He mentioned, "The succession belongs to the eldest and she should withdraw her boons. Ram is ready to go to forest, and this materializes, we will follow him and Ayodhya is going to be desolated."

It is true that the nature and characteristics of a female child follow the nature of her mother, where as mail child follows the nature of father. In proof of this he narrated a story related to the mother of Kaikeyi, "Kaikeyi's father had a boon from a sage to understand the talk of any creature including birds, animals etc. Once when he was in his bed room with his wife (Kaikeyi's mother), he laughed hearing the discourse of ants. His wife asked the reason for his laughter. He said if I tell you I would have to lose my life. She was adamant at the cost of his life to know the reason for his laughter. He went

to the sage and sought his permission to divulge the talk of ants to his wife. The sage forbade him not to do that. He didn't disclose that and remained happily." This incident indicates Kaikeyi is also following the same tread of her mother ignoring the life of her husband.

Despite his forceful exhortation to take back the boon Kaikeyi, didn't budge and maintained her stand unchanged.

### **2-36 Kaikeyi rejected transferring treasury and army (33 / 1540)**

Dasarath asked Sumantr, "Send all four category of army with Ram to forest. Make all arrangements in forest with treasury being transferred in the forest to assist Ram in staying conveniently in forest. The business houses be transferred to forest. Let there be available all facilities as available in Ayodhya."

Kaikeyi reacting to this mentioned, "The eldest son, Asamanj was exiled in forest by Sagar, and he had to live without any royal support. Why then Ram will receive the facilities in forest? Bharat will not accept the state devoid of royal army and treasury."

Hearing the quotation of Kaikeyi, one of the eldest and senior ministers of the king, Sidhartha interfered, "Asamanj was notorious. He used to derive cruel enjoyment by throwing live children in Saryu to die by drowning. He was exiled on public complain to the king en masse. There is no comparison of the referred case with the present one. No one has any grievance against Ram. If Kaikeyi has got any grievance she should come out openly her grievance against him."

Picking up from Sidhartha's pleading, Dasarath spoke to Kaikeyi, "O, Sinner, why don't you heed to what Sidharth is saying. Now I declare to discard every wealth and comfort of this state and shall follow Ram in forest and you rule with Bharat freely."

### **2-37 Kaikeyi gave them ascetic's dress (37 / 1577)**

When King ordered for royal army and treasury to follow Ram in forest Ram interfered, "Of what utility they are in forest? I am there to live an ascetic's life. I have to discard all luxurious style, then how would they serve me. I need ascetic's dress to put on and not the royal facilities." Hearing this, Kaikeyi immediately brought the bark dresses and gave to Ram. He along with Lakshaman wore them and took off the royal fine dress from their body. Sita also tried but wear that but she couldn't do that. While Ram helped in tying the bark over her silk dress the royal ladies shed tears.

The royal ladies asked Ram, "Leave her back with us. We would get solace in your absence." Ram continued putting bark on her body, while the women were forbidding her.

Vashishath couldn't bear the scene and burst out, "Kaikeyi, you have misled the king. You have transgressed all limits and caused a slur on the royal family. Sita has not been banished. In absence of Ram she will be the king who is equivalent to Ram. Even if she goes in forest we will all follow her. Let her be sent with royal facilities and stay in forest with Ram. Why shall she wear the mendicant's dress? Bharat is son of Dasarath and he is aware of the rule of dynasty. He won't rule the way you like. Both Bharat and Shatrughn shall remain in forest with Ram. You would be left alone to enjoy the desolate state. Where Ram is not present there is no kingdom. When he is in forest, the forest shall be kingdom for us."

On Vashishath's interference she was prevented from wearing the bark, but she didn't revoke her decision to go with Ram.

### **2-38 Dasarath to protect Kauslya ( 18 / 1595)**

When Sita was given the bark the people outside were denouncing the king. Hearing them, Dasarath once again got grip of remorse and sorrow. He sorrowfully asked Kaikeyi, "Why do you offer bark to her? She is not pledged to be banished. Look on her royal lineage and her tender physique, how do you dare bring a bark for her. Your meanness has crossed all limits. I personally deserve death for all such events."

Reproaching Kaikeyi and grieving on his fault, he swooned and fell on ground. After a short while, Ram addressed him politely, "Take care of my aged mother Kauslya. She is weak and in my absence her sorrow would make her further weak. You are commander for all of us. Let my mother be under your proper care."

### **2-39 Chariot for Ram, and Kausalya counseled Sita (41 / 1636)**

The words of Ram again stoked his sorrow and along with his wives he fell unconscious. Regaining the normalcy, he uttered, "Kaikeyi is the root cause of all the miseries. I ask for death but that doesn't visit me. One can't get rid of the misery by inviting ultimate end of death on his sweet will. He has to go through all the tribulations. I must have caused separation of several families in the past and that has caused the separation of my son also from me."

He uttered, "Ram" and his voice got choked with grief. He fell fainted. When he recovered, he asked Sumantr to bring the chariot for them to take them beyond the territory. Hearing his command, Sumantr went out and came back to inform the king about the readiness of the chariot.

Dasarath asked the courtiers to bring choicest jewels for Sita from treasure. The excellent ones were immediately produced before Sita. She bejeweled her body as desired by Dasarath.

Kausalya got hold of Sita in her arms and advised her, "Husband is the sole deity of a woman. When my son would be in forest never criticize him for inadequacy of convenience or comfort to you." Sita assured her to obey her commands and also mentioned, "With your blessings I am aware of wives responsibility to husband. How could I dare displease or discourage him in forest?"

While talking with Sita she again began shedding tears. Ram approached her and asked for her blessings. He advised her to take full care of the king. The period of fourteen years would pass in winking of your sleeping eyes and I would be back in good health and spirit to offer my salutation to you.

Ram looked upon three hundred fifty co-wives (**2-39-36**, and also **2-34-13**) of the king accompanying Kausalya and prayed for pardon if he had committed any mistake unknowingly in the past.

While Ram was taking leave of them wail and cry overtook the inner palace.

## 2- 40 Ram left the palace (51 / 1687)

Ram with Sita and Lakshaman gave round to the king and left touching his feet. They also touched the feet of mothers. When Lakshaman touch the feet of Sumitra following Kausalya, she asked him, "Ram is Dasarath, and Sita is Sumitra, forest is Ayodhya. See that Ram never faces any trouble."

When they came out, Sumantr with folded hands requested them to board the chariot. All three immediately got into the chariot and Sumantr drove fast on the royal avenue. Sea of people followed the chariot asking Sumantr to go slow while Ram asked him to drive fast. The dust behind the chariot was subdued with tears of the people following that.

Dasarath came out to see Ram going. Kausalya was running behind as a cow runs for her calf. Ram could see the parents coming on foot and he asked Sumantr to drive fast. Dasarath cried and asked Sumantr to stop but Ram advised him to keep going. Thus Ram came out of the sight of the parents who couldn't follow longer.

## 2-41 Mourning on departure (21 / 1708)

The lamentations of the queens from the inner rented the air of Ayodhya. They were looking for their supreme protector Ram who had been banished by the king. The citizens of Ayodhya were deep in sorrow. There was no fire burnt neither for *sandhya* oblation nor for cooking. The mourning isolated everyone. Wife didn't look for husband, nor son asked for mother, nor sister looked for brother. The animals were also shocked to the extent that the morsels in their mouth stayed unchewed. Neither the calf nor the mother cow came closer for feeding. Elephants remained stationary. The planets and stars disappeared from the sky. The sun set instantly with darkness all around. The pall of gloom spread over all the quarters made the *nakshatra* of *Vishakha* (2-41-12) hazy and dim.

## 2-42 Dasarath came lamenting to Kausalya's palace (34 / 1742)

Dasarath kept watching the chariot and the dusty trail it had left moving forward. When the dusty trail became invisible, he turned and fell fainted on the ground. Kausalya on his right, and Kaikeyi on his left tried to lift his dust smeared body. Having seen, Kaikeyi lifting him, he spoke, "Kaikeyi, don't touch me. I revoke all pledges made to fire during our marriage and not only for this world, in another world too I renounce you. If Bharat feels gratified in ascending the throne, let the rites performed by him on my death, not reach me."

Lamenting about Ram, he returned back to the city, "The one who always enjoyed the royal facilities now shall lie on ground under a tree. When the lord of the universe (2-42-18) shall rise in the morning with his body smeared with dust, the forest would behold him like an orphan. I lost both my sons and the beloved daughter-in-law who had never been to the thorny route of the forest. Kaikeyi, a widow would now enjoy the rule of the state."

When he asked attendants, "Take me to Kaushlay's palace", he was taken there and laid on a couch. He felt desolated and dejected. When the night had descended and it was approaching midnight, he asked Kausalya, "My eye sight has departed with Ram. I am

not able to see you. Keep your hands on my body.” Hearing him speaking sadly, Kausalya sat close to him.

#### **2-43 Kausalya complained to king (21 / 1763)**

While the king was lost in Ram, Kausalya turning towards him began thinking aloud which was mix of her complaint to Kaikeyi, as well as good wishes to Ram, “Kaikeyi has become supreme by sending Ram to forest. Like a poisonous snake she will now turn towards me to put me in trouble. My two sons are in forest. The daughter-in-law who could have never imagined about such calamity would now be entering dreadful forest. I would be really lucky when my sons would comeback keeping Sita in their front. I would be delighted to see the sea of people welcoming them by showering *laja* (paddy’s popcorn) when they would pass through the royal avenue.”

#### **2-44 Sumitra assuaged Kausalya’s agony (31 / 1794)**

Intervening Kausalya, Sumitra spoke to her in her bid to assuage her agony, “Ram is truthful, valiant and bold. His righteousness would cause sun, gods of wind and water to take his proper care. When the compassionate and ace archer Lakshaman is with him, let there be no cause of any concern. Sita would be protected by both of them. She knew the hardships of forest life and she willingly chose that life to help her husband in forest. Ram is himself god of gods and she is goddess Lakshmi (2-44-15/16/17), and looking to the potential they have Ayodhya and forest are alike. Due to steadfast state of mind Ram considers the forest life and royal life in Ayodhya in the same category, neither the former painful, nor the latter comfortable. At this moment to encourage the distressed people of Ayodhya is the great responsibility and it could be executed by you only. Everybody looks to you now. You will see how Ram will come back victorious in time, and when he would touch your feet your welling eyes would shed joyful tears over his head.” Kausalya was highly encouraged by her words and she got confidence to steer through the tough time.

#### **2-45 Ram arrived at Tamasa river ( 33 / 1827)**

Although the king had comeback citizens of Ayodhya had been following the chariot. Ram addressed them, “I respect your affection to me. My sincere request to all of you now is to show your affection on Bharat. He is the prince and the command of the king is to be carried by all of us. I am leaving for forest to honour the king’s command. Bharat is young but matured, and he affectionate to all.”

They continued moving and time and again he heard the prayer of the people to come back. There were group of elder *vajpeyi* Brahmins in the crowd behind Ram. Those Brahmins carry white umbrella as a custom and they offered their umbrella to Ram while they offered their request to the horses carrying the chariot, “O, fast and mighty horses, please do listen to our requests and stop taking him to forest. Get him back to Ayodhya.”

Hearing those Brahmins speaking to horses, Ram along with Sita and Lakshaman quit the chariot and began moving on foot forward towards forest. This caused surprises to the Brahmins who again requested him to stop as some of the Brahmins had commenced offering fire oblation. They also mentioned, “The birds either have been grieved by your movement to forest as they have become totally stationary over the tree

tops. Look at them and have mercy on all of us.” By this time, Tamasa river was in view. While Ram stopped, Sumantr made the horses free to relax, take water and graze around there.

#### **2-46 Ram quit secretly ( 34 / 1861)**

The sun had set and darkness of the night had begun. Ram spoke to Sumantr to take of the horses. Sumantr brought them back to safe place from grazing. Being the first night out of Ayodhya, Ram indicated to Lakshaman and Sita, “This is our first night and we should fully understand the constraints of the forest life. He preferred to remain on water that night. Time and again he praised the affection of the accompanying people of Ayodhya.

Sumantr and Lakshamn prepared the bed for Ram using leaves from the nearby places. Ram and Sita slept and Lakshaman continued them watching without a wink. He discussed with Sumantr as how the high standard of righteousness has been demonstrated by Ram. Night was about to end, Ram awoke and advised Lakshaman, “Let us move out quietly otherwise the people of Ayodhya is so much determined that they appear to sacrifice their life for us.” Lakshaman agreed to his proposal, and Sumantr immediately made the chariot ready. Mounting the chariot they crossed deep pool of Tamasa. After crossing the river Ram advised Sumantr to take the chariot in opposite direction and then after some distance take the route to forest so that our people couldn’t get any clue of direction of departure. As advised Sumantr did accordingly and finally they moved fast leaving the people of Ayodhya sleeping on the river bank.

#### **2- 47 Accompanying crowd came back (19/ 1880)**

The people when got up found their beloved gone. Then, repented a lot on their luck. They cursed the slumber and thought of ending their life in his absence. After sometime they searched out the track of the chariot but after a while they the trace disappeared. Dejected they moved back to Ayodhya. When they saw the city they became more sad of coming back to the place where Ram didn’t live.

#### **2-48 Lamenting women of Ayodhya (37 / 1917)**

When the citizens came back to their houses, the inmates, wives and sons began reproaching them, “Lucky is Lakshaman who could accompany him, and misfortune fell on our men who lost Ram and came back.” The continued praising the luck of each and every element of forest: river, pond, trees, mountains, plants and bushes etc. who would enjoy the presence of Ram. While lamenting thus they cursed time and again Kaikeyi, “We would leave this city and go to a place where we would never hear anything about this woman who discarded the ablest of the sons, and husband. We would die than to remain under her rule.

The city bore a deserted look. The shutters of the shops remained down without any transaction and business. The day ended and the gloomy dark night descended over the city. Houses had no cooking fire, no oblation to fire god, and Brahmins didn’t recite *veda*.



**2-49 Ram crossed several rivers ( 18 / 1935)**

Moving further from Tamasa, he crossed the river *Vedashruti*. Thereafter pacing fast towards forest he crossed the river *Gomati*. While crossing river *Syandika*, he spoke to Sita, "This river forms the southern boundary of Kosal *desh* ruled by Ikshavaku received in legacy from Manu." On way he heard several villagers indicating towards them and saying, "The king Dasarath under the evil influence of his queen Kaikeyi, has banished his righteous son Ram to forest. He is now on way to forest accompanied by his wife and brother."

Ram praised the natural environmental of the area passing after Kosal boundary where sages had been staying for long. He reminisced his early age hunting in the forest adjoining Saryu. He wondered whether after coming back from the forest exile when he would unite with his mother and father would get any chance again to go for hunting in the forest near Saryu.

**2-50 Ram met his fond friend Guh (51 / 1986)**

Crossing the border of the land of kosal, Ram became emotional with tears in his eyes and looking towards Ayodhya raised his folded hands up to pay sincere respect to the kingdom he had left. To the people of the passing villages who had gathered around him, he asked softly, "Look after your dwellings and family."

Moving ahead, he reached *shringberpur* (2-50-26) and the scene around sacred river *Ganga* slowly began unfolding. The river *Ganga* had genesis in the holy feet of lord Vishnu, and before she descended on earth with the efforts of Bhagirath, passed through the mighty hair locks of Shiv, and is lovely consort of sea. The river *Ganga* and its surrounding presented various pleasing sights. Some where the trees along the *Ganga* made it attractive, at another place she looked like a woven beautiful braid of a charming maid where water passed calmly in a narrow stream. Along the stream the *Ganga* had varying views. At some places deep pools were seen, while at other the *Ganga* flowed past producing musical notes. Varieties of birds had flocked at several places to enjoy cool water. The sacred *Ganga* river is abode of the celestials visiting regularly to enjoy and relax. In the celestial world having abundance of lotus she is called *devpadmini*.

Coming close to the *Ganga*, Ram spotted a tree of *Ingudi*, and indicated Sumantr to have a night stop there. While Sumantr unyoked the horses and allowed them to relax and enjoy the water of *Ganga*, Lakshaman made other arrangements. Lakshaman washed his feet when he settled on the ground.

In the meanwhile, the king of Nishad tribe, named Guh heard about his arrival. He rushed to him with several auspicious items including grains, water, varieties of juices, food, sleeping beds, horse food etc. in his honour. When Ram saw his friend Guh coming he moved forward and embraced him in his arms.

Guh welcoming him spoke, "There can't be a more prestigious and lovely guest than you. Ram, you take this place as your home and relax fully offering me to a chance to demonstrate hospitality to you." Ram welcoming and praising his affection mentioned, "Under a vow I can't accept your luxurious items. I have to remain as an ascetic on roots and fruits. Today I would stay on water. I would like to receive your help in keeping the

king Dasarath's horses satisfied." Guh immediately commanded to make arrangements of food and water for the horses.

Performing his routine rites to the setting sun in the west, Ram took water brought by Lakshaman and later retired for the night.

## 2-51 Night vigil by Lakshaman and Guh ( 27 / 2013)

Lakshamn kept awake and maintained a vigil by taking a position away from the place where Ram and Sita were sleeping. Guh came to him and advised him to take rest over the bed prepared by his men for him only and he further mentioned, "We tribal people are habitual of hardship but for you this is a tough life. Take rest and believe me I would maintain guard here. No one in this world is as dear to me as my friend Ram (2-51-4). "

न हि रामात् प्रियतरः मम अस्ति भुवि कश्चन ।

ब्रवीम्य् एतत् अहम् सत्यम् सत्येन एव च ते शपे ॥ २-५१-४

Lakshaman spoke to him, "I trust your capability and having been here with you enjoy full safety. However, when Ram and Sita are sleeping over ground how could I sleep and enjoy the pleasure of life !. I am afraid of mishap of death of king Dasarath who had obtained Ram as his son after so much of religious effort. Kauslya becoming widow could also meet the same fate whose lovely lone son is in exile. Sumitra would sustain her life is also doubtful, but she could survive to see Shatrughn. Shall we get back safely after exile ?" While Lakshaman continued lamenting and interacting with Guh, the night ended.

## 2-52 Ram crossed the Ganga ( 102 / 2115)

When the day broke Ram asked Lakshaman to cross the *Ganga* soon. Lakshaman then requested Guh to arrange for crossing. Guh immediately arranged a boat and informed Ram about the readiness of the boat with a boatman. Ram with Lakshaman and Sita was about to move towards the boat that Sumantr intervened. Ram advised him to go back and take care of the grieving king. Sumantr couldn't bear the separation and with voice choked he burst into tears. Ram very affectionately consoled him reminding his greater responsibility, "At present when the king is in trouble, he would bank more on you. See that he doesn't lose his patience and regains his normal lifeo. Pay my salutation to the king and all mothers. Advise king to send for Bharat and soon install him as regent prince which he wanted. Advise Bharat to be careful to Sumitra and Kauslya as he would be his mother Kaikeyi."

Hearing Ram, Sumantr again submitted, "I may speak like your friend for which I seek pardon. How can I get back without you ? My empty chariot would aggravate the condition of the king and Kauslya. You are aware of the pitiable condition of the people of Ayodhya, who had followed you. How can I assuage them? If I go and tell Kauslya that you have been taken to the maternal uncle's place, how about this? Can I speak lie? But it would be improper. If you desert me I would jump with the chariot into fire. I assure you that if you take me along in forest, I would keep your going convenient. I would also be benefited greatly by your kind association. I would go back taking you in the same chariot when your exile of fourteen years ends."

Trying to take him in confidence in several ways, Ram spoke, "My first priority of sending you soon to Ayodhya is to assure Kaikeyi that the king is true to his words and Ram has been exiled as committed to her. Unless you go back she will be in doubt, and your return will give her a proof of my departure to forest."

Ram turning towards Guh mentioned, "This forest here is inhabited and I can't stay here. I need to go the remote forest where ascetics stay. I need to dress my hair also as ascetics do. I need your help if you could get me the banyan tree secretion which works as a glue." Guh immediately arranged the banyan secretion and Ram along with Lakshaman dressed their hair style as that of ascetics. Before leaving Ram advised Guh to be alert and careful to army, treasury, fortress, and people to keep the state happy.

When he reached near the boat he asked Lakshaman to arrange first the entry of Sita to the boat and after he (Lakshaman) would get into the boat. Lakshaman followed his advice and when Sita and he were into the boat, Ram boarded after them. When Guh asked the boatman to move, Ram along with Sita performed religious rite of *achamany* (sipping holy *Ganga* water) followed by recitation of scriptural *mantra* applicable to both *kshatriya* and *Brahmin* together. Lakshaman also performed appropriate rites with the holy *Ganga* water.

Bidding good bye to Guh and Sumantr, Ram taking a seat asked the boatman to sail the boat across the river *Ganga*. When the boat reached the midstream Sita offered her prayer and worship to the goddess *Ganga*, saying, "You are *tripathga*, the one who has prevalence in all the three domains of heaven, earth and netherworld. I with my husband Ram and his brother Lakshaman are now going to stay in forest. I would worship you when coming back safely on expiry of fourteen years of exile to my husband." She also pledged, "When Ram gets back the kingdom after completion of the specified period, I would donate thousands of cows, cloths and grains to Brahmins with the sole intention to please you. My offer to you shall consist of thousands of jars full of sweet juice, and pots full of rice cooked by me."

The boat reached the right side of *Ganga* and they coming down of the boat move towards the forest. Ram addressing Lakshaman cautioned him, "This uninhabited forest may be dangerous. You need to lead by keeping Sita in the centre. I would guard both of you from the rear", and accordingly they arranged their position.

Sumantr whose eyes were chasing Ram couldn't see them further after they came to the right side bank of *Ganga* and moved forward in forest. He stood deeply depressed.

After crossing some rugged terrain they passed through *Vats* regions where cereal crops were found in abundance. They saw four varieties of deer: *varah*, *rishya*, *prishyat*, and *maharuru*. They halted for some time and took the wild fruits to satisfy their hunger.

Note: *Shlok* 2-52-89 is erroneously translated by some persons that Sita committed to offer liquor and meat with rice to goddess *Ganga*. Correct etymology, if used, never supports this incorrect translation of the original Sanskrit text. Similar error is committed commonly in translating *shlok* 2-52-102.

## 2-53 Ram lamented at third night (35 / 2150)

Ram stayed at night near a tree in a lonely place. He spoke, "Lakshaman this is the first night when we are without Sumantr. Let us keep all vigil for Sita and I would awake the full night." He further reflected on the prevailing condition in Ayodhya, "Kaikeyi must be very happy to realize her goal of crowning his son Bharat. The king, Kausalya and

Sumitra must be in grief. Feeling winsome and subduing the king, Kaikeyi would further put them in trouble. Lakshaman, I therefore ask you to henceforth move for Ayodhya and take care of the grieved parents. I would proceed further to forest with Sita.”

Ram continued lamenting, but Lakshmana interfered, “If you lament like this, you could imagine our state of misery. How we would survive without you ? It is not proper and now I won’t be back to Ayodhya in your absence.”

Hearing bold Lakshaman, Ram resolved to stay in the forest with Lakshman and they spent their night deliberating about the code of conducts prescribed for ascetics while occupying the bed prepared near the banyan tree.

## 2-54 Ram at the hermitage of Bhardwaj (43 / 2193)

Following morning after sunrise they moved forward comfortably and before end of the day they could see the column of smoke rising at a distant horizon. Ram indicated that place to be Prayag (2-54-5) at the confluence of the *Ganga* and *Yamuna*. The smoke – place could be the ashram of Bhardwaj. Gradually they arrived at the hermitage, and before entering stopped for a while outside. Entering the ashram they offered their salutation to the sage Bhardwaj who was surrounded by other sages, birds and animals.

Ram introduced themselves to him and mentioned that he was on exile by his father and the other two my wife and brother were accompanying him. The sage welcoming them offered water and madhupark ( a sweet soft drink made of curd, honey and milk) and other items of roots and fruits. He also mentioned, “**You are coming after a long time (2-54-21)**, and I have already heard about your unreasonable banishment. You are welcome at this ashram and stay here comfortably.”

Ram submitted, “This ashram is close to city and nearby countryside. The people, when having knowledge of my stay here might crowd the place. I would therefore prefer to stay at some lonely place free from the countryside visitors.” The sage advised him, “In that case, better choose a place at Chitrakoot where several known ascetics continue in their meditation. Chitrakoot is about 10 *kosha*<sup>1</sup> from here. A look at the mountain of Chitrakoot absolves one of sins. It has lovely and enriched natural environment with abundance of honey and fruits along with trees, plants, birds, animals and rivers. You either choose that place or stay here.”

Ram spent the night comfortably at the sage’s ashram engaged in several spiritual discourses, and next morning sought the permission of the sage to depart for Chitrakoot.

## 2-55 On way to Chitrakoot (34 / 2227)

When Ram offered salutation to the sage, he himself first performed *swastyayan*, (a recitation of sacred religious mantra) wishing their welfare and came out to see them off as if a father had come out to give a farewell to the sons and daughter-in-law.

He pointed out to the river *Yamuna* (variously called *kalindi* – the beloved daughter of sun god), and advised, “From the confluence point, on the upstream, take Yamuna coming from the west, cross it first using the self prepared raft. Thereafter there is a

<sup>1</sup> *Kosha* now- a -days stands for 2 miles, but it is evident the same unit of measurement meant about 8 miles in the *shlok* 5-54-28 and 5-55-8.

banyan tree called Syama, and Sita should offer her obeisance to that tree. Either stay there or if you move ahead about one *kosha* the blue forest touching the *kalindi's* bank will attract your attention. It has beautiful mix of trees of bamboos, *palash* and *badari*. That route will lead you to Chitrakoot which I have used for visiting the place several times.”

Ram then prayed the sage to be back to his hermitage. After responding with good wishes to their salutations the sage came back to his hermitage.

Moving ahead Ram reached the indicated place for crossing Yamuna. Both Ram and Lakshaman prepared one beautiful raft. Getting Sita first onto the board, they mounted the raft later after keeping their arms by the side of Sita. Sailing the raft across *Yamuna* when they arrived mid stream, Sita with folded hands, offered her prayer to the goddess *Kalindi*, “My husband is moving to forest on a vow. On successful completion of the vow and on return journey I would offer thousands of cows, and hundreds of jars filled with sweet drinks in your honour.” Thereafter they landed happily on the southern bank of the river *kalindi*.

Moving ahead they arrived at *syama* tree where Sita offered her obeisance with folded palms, “Accept my prayer and grant successful completion of vow of my husband. Grant us the opportunity to get back safely to see our mothers Kauslya and Sumitra.” Saying thus she completed one round of the *syama* tree.

While Sita was offering her prayer, Ram advised Lakshaman, “Take a lead and Sita will follow you. I would be keeping guard of both of you from behind. Allow Sita to enjoy the natural scene, and keep her happy meeting her desire whatever she expresses.”

As planned, they moved by keeping Sita in the centre. Lakshaman used to bring varieties of attractive flowers for which Sita expressed her wishes. Several varieties of flowers over plants she had not seen earlier contributed in her great visual delight. She enjoyed the river side forest resonating with the sound of several birds including peacocks and cuckoos. They paused on way for their food, enjoying at the same time scene of movement of the lovely deer around. Further, finding a plain and suitable place they stopped for their night halt.

Note: The meaning of *shlok* 2-55-34 is again misconstrued, and it requires proper understanding of background of the forest journey of Ram, the creator of the three worlds.

## 2-56 Chitrakoot (38 / 2265)

The brightness of dawn was visible. Ram awoke Lakshaman, “O valiant one, now get up<sup>2</sup> we have to continue our journey to Chitrakoot.” Lakshaman responded immediately shunning his sloth and they again set out towards their destination. While continuing the journey they could see from a distance the peaks of the Chitrakoot mountain. Coming closer the trees were found dangling honey mesh in abundance. There were loads of tasty fruits on various trees. The melodious sound of birds, peacock responding to chatak, and others fluttering their wings were the common scene. Passing through the pleasant scene they arrived at the ashram of Valmiki. When they offered their respectful salutation to the sage, he honoured them and offered proper seating.

<sup>2</sup> It is said that Lakshaman never slept during 14 yrs of forest life, but this *shlok* 56-1 contradicts this.

Ram impressed by the environment, asked Lakshaman to raise the shelter around there. Soon the timber logs were collected and a full set of the shelter was made ready having roof of the leaves.

Ram assisted by Lakshaman made the preparations for *vastu shanti* (performing auspicious rites before entering a new shelter). Black roots dear to Ram, other auspicious items of grains, fruits, honey etc. were collected. The black roots were baked in fire (for which Ram had a craving) and along with other items the worship of fire and other gods were performed. On completion of the auspicious rites Ram, Lakshaman and Sita entered the cottage. They were so delighted at Chitrakoot that for time being they forgot all their concerns about Ayodhya.

Note:

- (i) From *shlok* 2-56-23 onwards, at several places the word “*mams*” and “*krishn mriga*” had been translated as meat of black deer. It is not correct. The meaning of “*mams*” is understood by “*mam माम्*” + “*asa अस (असृ)*”, which really means “my food” and not meat.
- (ii) *Mriga* is understood by conjunction of the words *mri मृ (मृण)* + *ga ग (गमय)* which means the one found moving buried in soil, i.e., roots. It is unimaginable, how could Ram who had very categorically told Guh that he was on vow and would remain on roots and fruits would take the meat as some of the commentators have mistakenly understood so.

## 2-57 Sumantr reported to the King ( 34 / 2299)

After crossing the *Ganga* by Ram, Sumantr along with Guh had discussed helplessly for quite long. Guh got message from his people that Ram after visiting Bhardwaj at Prayag had gone to Chitrakoota. Sumantr engaging the horses to the chariot moved towards Ayodhya with a very heavy heart. He reached the city in three days. The people crowded his chariot and he spoke, “When Ram crossed the *Ganga* I came bank.” The people once again fell in grief. Sumantr passing seven ramparts of the royal palaces entered the eighth one where the king was staying. He reported to the king the message conveyed by Ram. The king hearing the message fell unconscious. Kausalya had several attack of fits and losing her balance spoke to king, “Why are you ashamed now? Sumantr had come back, why don’t you ask about your beloved son? Don’t fear, Kaikeyi is not here.” Hearing her lamentations the women and men of the palace and the city together raised a lamenting cry.

## 2-58 Dasarath again called Sumantr for report ( 37 / 2336)

When Dasarath came back to his consciousness, he called again Sumantr and asked about the messages from Ram, Lakshaman and Sita. He also wanted to know, “How, habitual of royal treatment my sons and daughter-in-law are loitering in forest?” Sumantr repeated the message of Ram, “Offer my salutations to the king, all mothers. Advise Kaushalya to take proper care of the king, as husband is the ultimate god of a married woman. Advise Bharat to take all mothers on equal footing and obey the command of the king who is still on throne.”

Sumantr mentioned, “As regards Lakshmana’s message, he was very angry and he spoke to convey that how did the king dare banish such a righteous son to forest. I don’t consider him as my father. From now onwards Ram is my father, friend, well wisher and everything.”



“As regards Sita” , Sumantr said, “ She couldn’t speak any word. She continued shedding tears while gazing at the chariot.”

### **2-59 Frequent fits to Dasarath ( 34 / 2370)**

Sumantr continued with his experience how the natural entities were noticed deeply grieved of Ram’s departure to forest, “When I tried to engage horses to the chariot after crossing of the *Ganga* by Ram, the horses avoided accepting the yoke. I could see how the buds and flowers have weathered away. The water of pools, lakes and rivers have become hot. The leaves of the trees have become parched and falling on the ground. The fish have fallen to mud level. Lotus have weathered and fallen down in water and mud. The people of Ayodhya became so remorseful when they saw my chariot devoid of Ram.”

Hearing Sumantr the king spoke feebly, “Instead of being trapped in a woman’s words I could have contacted the elders, ministers and sacred texts. I didn’t do that and now I have fallen in a deep sea of sorrow. I won’t live if I don’t see Ram. Take me in chariot to Ram or else immediately bring him back, this is the king’s command.”

Lamenting thus the king had passed through repeating cycles of fits of unconsciousness and consciousness. However, this drew the attention of Kausalya, and she got concerned about the deteriorating condition of the king.

### **2-60 Sumantr consoled Kausalya ( 23 / 2403)**

She asked the charioteer to take her immediately to the forest, “She won’t bear anymore the parting pangs. Take back now the chariot and show me the forest where they reside.” Sumantr with folded hands submitted, “There is nothing for concern as the righteous Ram has a strong resolve to honor the king’s words. The forest is like their city garden, and they take the forest as if they are on visit to the outskirt forest of the city. Sita doesn’t have to think about anything as she is under the protection of Ram.”

### **2-61 Kauslya complained her helplessness ( 27 / 2430)**

Not satisfied by the consoling words of Sumantr, Kauslya turned towards the king and mentioned, “I am so helpless. How can a wise father send a righteous son to forest? The one who ever enjoyed the royal facilities has been sent to forest for such a long period. Even if he comes back in fifteenth year, I wonder, he will accept the state ruled by his younger brother. At any occasion when Brahmins are served food after the food has been served to other relatives, they don’t accept it. Similarly Ram won’t accept the state for rule which has first been in the possession of his younger. It is said for a woman the husband is first refuge, son is the second refuge, relatives are the third refuge. For me none of them are available. You are happy with the happiness of Kaikeyi and Bharat.”

Hearing her lamentation, Dasarath was again gripped by the deep grief.

### **2-62 Dasarath sought favor from Kauslya ( 21 / 2451)**

His grief caused him to lose his consciousness. After long time he regained his consciousness, and began reflecting on his past deeds. He recalled his misdeed of once shooting a shaft mistaken by a particular sound and hit mortally the unseen human target. That incident and the present one of Ram compounded his grief. With folded hand, having his head low he spoke to Kauslya, “ I know I am the culprit. You are a compassionate woman showering mercy on others. Even if a husband is devoid of

virtues he is respectful for his wife. Have mercy on me and see my appeal to you with my joined palms to you.”

Looking to the king, Kauslya regained her reasons and felt very sorry for complaining time and again his misdeeds. She admitted her fault. By the end of the fifth day of Ram's banishment, the night has descended and Dasarath fell to sleep.

### **2-63 Dasarath recalled killing an unseen target ( 56 / 2507)**

After a while he got up and recalled the misdeed he had once committed when he was regent prince of the state. He compared his present misdeed of banishing Ram, and once killing unseen person with that of an ignorant boy who cuts mango tree and nurtures *palas* tree misguided by leaf and flower of the latter. When the *palas* tree bears fruits the boy begins repenting in vain on cutting off the mango tree.

He narrated the incident to Kauslya, “Then you were unmarried, and I was a prince. I was fond of hunting the target by aiming on the sound coming out from the destination. It was rainy season. The heat of the day was lowered down by a down pour. The day has come to end. The clear river water was getting mixed with runoff carrying mix of minerals and soil. In the night time I went out aboard my chariot along the bank of Saryu for hunting. I could hit successfully two wild animals of lesser breed. I heard a sound resembling that of an elephant. My shooting shaft hit the unseen target. The sound was from a pitcher being drowned in water. I heard the voice of a lamenting human being.”

The man was complaining, “Out of city I stay in forest as an ascetic. I did no harm to any body, and what he will gain by killing me. With one arrow he has killed me and my parents.” When I approached the wailing person lying on ground oozing blood, he glanced on me and spoke, “ O, King! why did you kill me ? I didn't commit any mistake. Now take out the arrow from my body, I am in deep trouble.”

I knew that if I took out the arrow from his body he would die instantly, but I began taking out the shaft and he continued speaking, “Dasarath, my blind hermit parents must have lost the thirst by this time. Sure, they must have been concerned about my return. Follow this track and take water to them. I assure you, if you see them, they would pardon you. I also carry no grudge, and with my stable mind I like to remind you that don't repent of killing a Brahmin. I am son of a shudra mother from a *vaishya* father.”

Dasarath further mentioned, “No sooner the shaft came out of his body than he dropped dead.”

### **2-64 Dasarath completed the story ( 79 / 2586)**

Dasarath further narrated to Kauslya, “As indicated by the young ascetic, with pot full of water I took the track and reached the ascetics ashram.” Hearing the sound of my nearing steps, the blind aged ascetic spoke, “ O, son ! you have been delayed. Don't worry, come inside and give us water. Why you are not speaking to us, I am surprised.” “Hearing those words” , Dasarath said, “ I broke my silence with great courage. I am a kshatriya warrior, and my name is Dasarath. I came on hunting. Hearing the sound of the water pot being drowned in water I charged an arrow over your son mistaking that as an elephant , and he is now no more.”



The ascetic could not control his wrath and spoke, "If you have not spoken yourself the truth, your head would have fallen into hundreds of pieces. Not only that your illustrious Ikshavaku dynasty would have been ruined also. Take us immediately to our son."

When they were taken to place where young ascetic's body was lying, they touched his body and applauding his services so far grieved for their future fate in his absence. They offered their water homage to the deceased ascetic. One beautiful spirit came out of the body and joined Indr in heaven. While leaving the spirit spoke to the old ascetic couple, "You will soon join me in heaven."

The old couple were so aggrieved that they also died and before dying the old one cursed me, "As I am dying of the separation of my son, you will also meet the same fate."

Dasarath continued, "O, Kauslya ! The time has come for my departure. I won't now survive the separation of Ram. I repent of falling a prey to cruel and sinner Kaikeyi. I appreciate the patience demonstrated by you and Sumitra."

Thus lamenting and reflecting, it was after midnight, that the King breathed his last.

## **2-65 Dasarath passed away ( 29 / 2615)**

Customary to royal house, the bards in the morning collected to eulogize the glory of the king and began presenting their song and music. Other attendants also gathered and made all arrangements for bath of the king. Those who had an access to the king, when reached near him found him motionless. They found Kauslya and Sumitra sleeping. When they were confirmed of the death of the king, they began with a wailing cry which caused Kauslya and Sumitra to wake up.

Having come to know of the king's ultimate departure, Kauslya fainted and fell on the ground. Kaikeyi and other queens began crying. Soon the palace was under gloom of the king's demise.

## **2-66 Lamenting family (29 / 2644)**

While Kauslya and others were denouncing Kaikeyi for the ultimate sorrow, the ministers arranged to keep the dead body of the king in an oil trough. Because none of his sons was present the cremation couldn't be conducted. The city, relatives and country's crowd bemoaned the death of the valorous king. Kauslya while wailing apprehended the mishap with Janaka also, "Sita is his only issue, and she is in forest. When he would learn about the incidents, how would he bear all these! "

Thus lamenting the day passed off and darkness of night set in.

## **2-67 Sages apprehend sufferings ( 38 / 2682)**

The night passed off with wails and cry. When the sun rose, the priests and Brahmins in-charge of coronation and crowning gathered at the royal palace, and among them were Markandeya, Modgalya, Vamdev, Kasyap, Katyayan, Gautam, and Jabali. They together met the family preceptor Vashishath and mentioned, "Ram and Lakshman are in forest. Bharat and Shatrughn are in maternal uncle's place in the city of Rajgriha, of Kekaya *desh*. When the king has passed away the kingdom is now like a boat without a rudder. There is no body from the royal family who could take command of the state."

One by one they enumerated, “what happens when there is no king of a kingdom: The religious rites are stopped. Business transactions don’t take place. Merrymaking and auspicious functions don’t take place. The enemy of the adjoining territory become active. Those who have been punished by the king become active and work with vengeance.”

They continued narrating all sorts of sufferings which the state might have to face if there is no king in command.

## 2-68 The messengers to Bharat ( 22 / 2704 )

Hearing the sages Vashishatha proposed to send messenger to Bharat whom the king had wished the kingdom. Getting the consent of all, he called Sidhartha, Vijay, Jayant, Ashok and Nandan and asked them to immediately move to bring Bharat and Shatrughan from their maternal uncle's place. He asked them to convey, “The royal preceptor and the council of ministers have asked your welfare and they want to see you urgently there in Ayodhya. Don’t tell them about the exile of Ram and death of the king. Take some royal gifts, i.e., silk and ornaments to be handed over to them and the king there.”

Those messengers quickly got ready and moved on fast footed horses towards the city of Rajgriha. On way touching Malini river they crossed the mountainous passes of Apartala and Pralamab. They crossed the *Ganga* at Hastinapur (could be other than today's city known by this name). Passing though Kuru Jangal they reached Panchal. On way they saw several lakes, rivers and water bodies. Passing *Sardanda* river carrying crystal clear water, they came across the coastal tree “*Satyopayachan*” which fulfils one’s desires. They gave a round of the tree as a mark of honour and saluting the tree with respect moved further. They passed through the city of Kulingam, and after that they passed a village known as Abhikala. They crossed the river Ikshumati which flew had its genesis in the mountain of Bodhibhavan attached with the family of Dasarath and his forefathers. Meeting Brahmins taking water from their palms, they crossed Bahilka territory and its mountain Sudama.

On way they happened to visit Vishnu Pad, Vipasa river, and Salmali trees. They also saw the region inhabited by lions, tigers, elephants, and deer. The terrain was marked by several lakes and water bodies. By night, they finally arrived at the Giribraj city of Bharat.

## 2-69 Bharat had horrible dream (21 / 2725)

The same night when messengers entered the city, Bharat had scores of bad dreams, “Saw father anointed with oil, tumbling down from a mountain top, plunged into a pond filled with cow dung. He was drinking oil from the cups made of jointed palms. He was then taken in south direction in a chariot driven by asses. He was wearing red garland and a woman was driving his chariot.”

When he told about the dream to his friends they tried to entertain him in various ways with an aim to divert his attention from the horrible dream. But Bharat didn’t look cheerful. His attention was riveted on dream and he apprehended the misfortune, “End of his father, or his own , or end of Lakshaman.”

## 2-70 Bharat departed for Ayodhya (30 / 2755)

The messengers met the king kekeya , and prince Yudhajit. Paying their respects and salutations they met Bharat and passing over the royal gifts they had carried from Ayodhya, spoke, “ O, prince! The royal priest and ministers have enquired about your welfare and have expressed their wish to see you urgently in Ayodhya.”

Bharat enquired, “ How is father? How are Ram and Lakshaman ? How is kind mother Kauslya ? Tell me about mother Sumitra. How is my mother Kaikeyi who is always in wrath suffering from her ego of intelligence and beauty ? “

The messengers replied in positive and advised him to make his chariot ready to depart. Bharat handed over those gifts to his maternal grandfather and uncle. He also gifted the messengers fabulously.

Bharat sought the permission of the king mentioning the message from Ayodhya. The king of Kekeya appreciating his lineage and worthiness of his valiant brothers and father permitted him to depart. As a mark of affection and blessings Yudhajit and Aswapati smelt his head.

While departing his maternal grandfather (Aswajit), and maternal uncle Yudhajit gave him precious gifts of two thousand gold coins, sixteen thousand horses, elephants of airavat breed born in Indrasira mountains, swift chariots drawn by mules, and horses. The gifts to Bharat included varieties of silk, woolen cloths etc.

Riding the chariot and accompanied by entourage of attendants from Kekaya *desh* Bharat and Shatrughn departed for Ayodhya.

## 2-71 Bharat on way to Ayodhya ( 47 / 2802)

The places which Bharat passed through are: Sudam river, Ahlidini river flowing eastward, Shatradru river at Eledhana village, region of Apraparapata, hilly terrain of Akurvati, villages of Agneyam and Salyakartan, Shilvaha river, the forest of Chitrarath, confluence of Sarswati and Ganga, forest of Bharund on the north side of Veermatsya region, fast flowing kulinga river surrounded by ahaldini mountain range. When they crossed Yamuna river they stopped and took rest there. They crossed the *Ganga* at Pragvat, and then crossed river Kutkosthika. Further on his journey he passed through: village Jambuprasth on southern part of Toran, village Varutha, taking rest there further passed through Ujjihana where kadamb trees were in abundance.

He yoked fast horses and leaving behind the army, he passed though Uttamika river near Sarvathirtha village, Kutika river near Hastaprashtak, Kapivati river near Lohitya village, Sthanumati river at Ekasala village, Gomati river at Vinata village, taking rest in sal trees grove near Kalinga city moved ahead.

Driving through night he quickly came to see Ayodhya established by Manu. From a distance he didn't see the previously experienced jubilation around the city parks and groves. He entered the Vaijayant gate and was given royal customary salutation. Thereafter he missed the incense and sandal fragrance in the city. The deities in the temples were found unattended. The tree had fallen trees. The floors of the place royal horses used to wait were not cleaned. People around had a pale face. No business activities seen in the city area.

Seeing the desolated Ayodhya, having great fear in his mind he entered the royal palace of the king.

### **2-72 Kaikeyi broke the news of death of the king ( 54 / 2856)**

When Bharat didn't find the king in his palace he entered his mother's chamber. He touched the feet of his mother and she blessing him by smelling his head, enquired about his journey and about her father and brother in Kekaya. Bharat replied, " I reached here in seven days. The entourage with me carrying the fabulous gifts are behind me. I came swiftly considering the king either is going to anoint Ram as crown prince or hold any sacred sacrifice. Tell me where is father ?

Hearing his keen query she replied, "You glorious father who has credit of great performances has taken the path of heavenly abode." Hearing this Bharat fell like a tree. He lamented loudly for the king's demise. Bharat praised the luck of Ram who would have performed the last rites of father. He mentioned, " Ram being elder and righteous is like my father. Announce my arrival to him."

He asked, "What were the last words of the king?" Kaikeyi mentioned, while dying he uttered, " Hey Ram, Lakshaman and Sita." His second utterance was, "Those would be fortunate who would see Ram coming back from forest."

The second statement made Bharat fearful and scared. He asked, "Why Ram with Lakshaman and Sita is in forest?" Kaikeyi broke the news, " The king had made preparations for crowning Ram as prince. I claimed my two boons: One, crown for you, and two, exile for Ram. Under the grief of exiling Ram to forest the king ended his life. You need not worry about that. Go and meet Vashishath, and after doing the rites of the king, get yourself crowned as prince."

### **2-73 Bharat rejected the crown ( 28 / 2884)**

Bharat lost his cool and burst on his mother, " You are a sinner. You killed my valiant father and exiled my righteous Ram to forest. My simple father didn't know that in you he was embracing a fire. You have disgraced the family. You are not aware of the primary tradition of the Iksahavaku house. The elder has always been crowned king and the younger ones are to serve the elder. Ram always respected you like his own mother Kauslya. You always received affection of younger sister from Kauslya. You are greedy and have ruined the entire royal structure. I would have disowned you as mother, had Ram not considered you as mother."

Bharat continued, " I am firm and would now go to forest to bring back Ram and crown him as king. I would serve him as his servant."

### **2-74 Bharat denounced his mother ( 36 / 2920)**

Bharat continued, "I won't speak to you. You are a sinner. Go to hell, and you would never get a seat in heaven where the king has gone."

Denouncing her acts he cited one instance, " The celestial cow, Kamdhenu possessed by Vashishath could see once how her sons were being tortured on earth to plow land in

scorching sun. Tear drops fell from her eyes and they fell on the body of Indr who was roaming around in the lower domain.

He could identify the tears of the celestial cow, Kamdhenu. Coming to her, he asked, “What made you weep mother? Do we face any calamity ?” The cow replied, “No, the leader to Gods ! I am grieved with the condition of my sons being forced to work in scorching sun over earth.” Indr could realize the pain of a mother for son.

Bharat mentioned, “Kamdhenu has hundreds of offspring, where as Kauslya has a lone son. Her pitiable condition compared to Kamdhenu could be several times more severe.” Bharat continued, “You need to end your life immediately either by taking poison or squeezing a rope around your throat. I can’t show my face to the citizens.” With these words, Bharat denounced her and he fell on the ground fainted.

### 2-75 Bharat met Kausalya (65 / 2985)

When he regained his senses, he found himself amidst ministers and Kaikeyi. Reproaching her again he spoke, “I have never come to know of her evil design for my crown, nor do I know the banishment of Ram.” After asserting his stand, he moved with Shatrughn to see Kauslya. In the meanwhile Kauslya hearing his voice, moved to see Bharat along with Sumitra. On way Kauslya fell fainted, and Bharat came close to her. When she regained her senses, she spoke, “Bharat ! Your mother has arranged crown for you. Now you need to enjoy this and my son would remain in exile. I request you to send me to exile to my son who has divine mark of *Hirnyagarbha*<sup>3</sup> (हिरण्यगर्भा **golden navel 2-75-13**). If nobody takes me there, with Brahmins, I would carry the sacred fire of this house and proceed to forest to be with my son.”

Having heard the harsh words of Kauslya, Bharat tried to convince her that he didn’t have any knowledge what her mother had designed for him and exile for Ram. He swore by a series of utterances, “If I knew his exile, let my wife have no issue. If I knew his exile let me turn a beggar with a bowl in my hand. Like this he invited several curses against himself.”

Kauslya was convinced with his ignorance about what Kaikeyi had done for him. She dragged him in his laps and wept bitterly. Bharat also ran into swoons several times and thus the day ended and night set in.

### 2-76 Bharat performed the last rites (23 / 3008)

Next day Vashishath consoled Bharat,” My blessing be with you. You have lamented enough. Now it is time to perform the last rites of the king with due honour.” Obeying the guru’s command, Bharat moved immediately and took out the body of the king immersed in oil. He began weeping seeing the face of the king, “What purpose it served by sending Ram, Lakshaman and Sita to forest ? Your absence from this kingdom is like the night without moon.” While he was lamenting uttering several instances, Vashishath reminded him again to get involved in appropriate rites.

Bharat obeyed and followed what the priests guided him to do. The king’s body was carried in a decorated palanquin which was preceded by throwing loads of precious

<sup>33</sup> This proves the supreme divinity of Ram which Kauslya knew and divulged on this occasion.

cloths and jewels. The incense of sandal permeated the air. The priests recited relevant vedic texts.

Kauslya and other queens gave rounds of the king body and riding the carriages they arrived at Saryu where final cremation was performed. They came back from there after offering homage of water to the king. They spent ten difficult days in observing the rites and taking bare floor for sleeping.

## 2-77 Twelfth and thirteenth day of rites ( 26 / 3034)

On twelfth day on performance of religious rituals of offering pind (oblation of rice balls) to three preceding generations, precious gifts were given to Brahmins. The gifts included cloths, jewels, cows, houses, maids, servants etc. Bharat liberally offered the valuables to priests, poor and Brahmins.

On thirteenth day while picking up bones from the cremation place of the deceased to be finally flown in the water of Saryu, Bharat and Shatrughn became emotional. They wept bitterly remembering the love father had bestowed upon them. They recalled those days and the current state in which he left the world while Ram was in exile. While Bharat and Shatrughn rolled over cremation ground, Vashishath consoled Bharat, "Hunger and thirst, birth and death, pain and pleasure are three eternal facts which everybody has to bear in this world." Sumantr consoled Shatrughn and reminded him about universality of life and death. The ministers helped in huddling back two brothers to palace.

## 2-78 Shatrughn reflected on Lakshaman (26 / 3060)

While Bharat and Shatrughn were together, Shatrughn spoke to Bharat, "I am surprised how Ram who is the ultimate destination of all beings (2-78-2) has been sent to forest , even if Lakshaman was here. He should have restrained the king in the beginning itself.

गतिर् यः सर्व भूतानाम् दुःखे किम् पुनर् आत्मनः ।

स रामः सत्त्व सम्पन्नः स्त्रिया प्रव्राजितः वनम् ॥ २-७८-२

While they were reflecting on the turn of events, the guards saw Kubja coming fully dressed with loads of jewels and precious cloths. She had smear of sandal paste over her body. Her dressing up with varieties of jewels looked as if a female monkey has tied herself with ropes. They caught hold of her and handed over to Shatrughn mentioning she was the root cause of the developments.

Shatrughn holding her firmly dragged violently over the ground, and in this process some of her jewels had scattered here and there. Her companions fled away sensing the wrath of Shatrughn. Kaikeyi rushed to Bharat for seeking help to liberate Kubja. Bharat advised Shatrughn, " Don't anything with a woman. She is always pardonable. Had Ram not felt otherwise I would have killed the greatest sinner Kaikeyi first. I am afraid he will not approve our conduct."

When Shatrughn released her she ran to Kaikeyi and got consolation from her.

## 2-79 Bharat was offered throne ( 17 / 3077)

In the morning of the fourteenth day, the council of ministers and priests requested Bharat to accept the crown and rule the state. They intimated him about the preparations made to crown him as the king. Bharat made a round of the auspicious items brought for

his coronation and with folded hands submitted, "The king is now no more. The inheritor of the crown is in forest. I would go with all these auspicious items to forest and anoint him the king at the earliest there. He will comeback as king and I would remain in forest for the assigned term of exile. I advise to take the full contingent of troops to forest in his honour of coronation. Let path be made even for the convenient movement to the forest."

The statement of Bharat gave a live encouragement to the ministers and elders. They appreciated his idea and began the preparations for the forest.

## **2-80 Highways cleared ( 22 / 3099)**

As desired by Bharat skilled craftsmen, artisans and planners were deployed to clear the track for movement to forest. They began their work with full devotion and took first the removal of unsuitable materials from the pathway. The creepers, loose soil, and inconvenient rocks were removed. The depressions were filled with suitable materials. Proper arrangement of water supply was made at convenient locations by the side of the pathway, with the provision of adequate number of wells.

Tents for stay of Bharat were erected in auspicious period. They were fully decorated to reflect the perfect royalty. Arrangements for supply of varieties of fruits were also made.

## **2-81 Assembly hall (16 / 3115)**

It was the preceding night of *nandimukha shradh*. As per royal custom, bards and musicians began playing their instruments. This quiet palatial premises was resonated with varieties of musical notes. This aggravated Bharat's sorrow and he asked Shatrughn to stop them.

Later he reflected with Shatrughn, "Because of misdeeds of Kaikeyi this kingdom has become rudderless. The inheritor is banished and the king has left for heavenly abode. I can't bear such things.

Meanwhile Vashishath arrived in the royal assembly hall and occupying the presidential seat asked to invite the Brahmins, ministers, Bharat and Shatrughn and elders. Immediately the city became alive with the movement of chariots and horses of the invitees coming to attend the assembly meeting. When Bharat arrived he was given due honour as was given to Dasarath.

## **2-82 Bharat pledged to bring back Ram (32 / 3147)**

When the assembly was full of the participants represented by elite, scholars and Brahmins and respectable citizens, Vashishath addressed Bharat, "The king Dasarath has left back the royal legacy full of riches and well disciplined stable state. The enemies have already been destroyed. This is a prosperous state, and you need to accept the kingship immediately."

Bharat expressed his feelings, "I can't rob the inheritance. It is the custom of this royal house from Dilip to Nahush that elder has the right of inheritance. Ram, the righteous eldest son of the king is in forest to honour the king's words. I pledge to take him back to the throne of this kingdom. He is the only inheritor of this crown. I have made the arrangements for movement in advance to set the path to forest in order so that troops

could have convenient run. If I couldn't be able to get him back, I would stay in forest as my respectful brother Lakshaman is doing."

Bharat indicated to Sumantr to ask the army chiefs and warriors to move for forest. Let all preparations for adequate number of chariots, horses and elephants be made ready to move. Sumantr happily made all arrangements and from every house of Brahmin, *kshatriya*, *vaishya* and *shudra* he got the response in favour of the proposal to move for the forest.

### 2-83 Bharat on move ( 26 / 3173)

Early morning the ministers, and priests had moved out before Bharat left Ayodhya. On day Bharat left on a chariot. With him nine thousand elephants, sixty thousand chariots and one hundred thousand horses were on move.

Mothers Kaikeyi, Sumitra, and Kausalya were going on separate chariots in a mood to get back Ram to Ayodhya. Citizens of Ayodhya were jubilant on their move to visit their beloved and affectionate Ram. Various categories of craftsmen related to potteries, carpentry, flower scents, jewelry, fine stone, ironsmith, tailors, and washers had joined the moving mass. Brahmins learned in scriptures were moving on bullock carts.

When they reached Shringberpur the *Ganga*, flocked by *chakra* birds, offered a great visual delight. This place belongs to Guh, a great friend of Ram, who was chief of Nishad tribe. Bharat advised them to stop for rest as troops were still behind. Taking the advantage of the opportunity, Bharat offered water homage in the *Ganga* to his deceased father.

### 2-84 Guh got scared ( 18 / 3191)

Seeing innumerable troops camping on the bank of the *Ganga*, Guh alerted his guards and men to guard the ferry line strictly. He noticed a **large banner marked with kovidara tree** flying a top Bharat's chariot. He wondered, " Bharat is here to seize us or kill us, or is he going to kill Ram and grab the kingdom of Ayodhya for ever. Let there be five hundred boats kept ready guarded by one hundred young musclemen. If Bharat is learnt to have good intention then only his army would be allowed to cross the *Ganga*."

With a view to understand Bharat's motive, Guh went to see him with gifts of honey, fruits, and fish. Having seen Guh coming Sumantr spoke to Bharat, "The man surrounded by thousand of people is Guh, the chief of Nishad and a great friend of Ram. He knows precisely where Ram is staying now." Hearing Sumantr, Bharat became excited and advised him, "Introduce me to him immediately."

Coming to Bharat Guh mentioned, "I am your subject, and my home is quite close. I pray you to grace our place with your presence. The troops need to take rest today and tomorrow they should cross the *Ganga*."

### 2-85 Guh assured help ( 22 / 3213)

Hearing Guh's hospitable words, Bharat enquired which of the two routes would lead to the *ashram* of the sage Bharadwaj. Guh promptly spoke, "Our ferry men and me personally would accompany you to ensure a proper guidance. I have a doubt as to why



do you take such a large troop with you. Do you have any plan against Ram ? “ Bharat instantly picked up and expressed his pure intention of visiting Ram was to take him back to Ayodhya. Finding Bharat anguishly wailing, Guh was highly impressed and assured all help to him and praised his greatness, “No person on earth can measure your personality. You got the kingdom from your father without any effort and now you offer it back to Ram.”

Bharat with Shatrughn kept reflecting for long. His grief had slowly taken the proportion of a large unbearable mountain and he found himself crushed under that. He again met Guh with a stable mind.

## 2-86 Guh narrated about Ram’s stay (25/ 3238)

Guh narrated how Lakshaman, the gem of human being, had impressed him, “ It was night time. Ram was sleeping with Sita on ground. I offered Lakshaman a comfortable bed to take rest while his brother was also sleeping. Lakshaman ignoring my offer told me, “How can I sleep, when my elder brother with Sita is lying on blades of grass. I can’t do that. I am sure, father Dasarath, mother Kauslya and Sumitra would die soon. Sumiitra may survive because of Shatrughn, but there is hardly any chance for Kauslya. I appreciate the fate of Shatrughn who would perform their last rites.” Thus lamenting, in anguish, Lakshaman spent the whole night keeping a vigil over Ram. In the morning, both the brothers, using the milky glue of the banyan tree, made their hair matching to ascetics’ hair style. Thereafter, they were ferried across *Ganga*. Looking back on me they departed to forest.”

## 2-87 Guh .....continued on Ram’s stay ( 24 / 3262)

Hearing the narration of Guh, Bharat fell unconscious over ground. Shatrughn taking him in his arms, cried loudly which caused Kauslya and other mothers to huddle around Bharat. Kauslya was in tears but closely embaraced Bharat and spoke, “Son, you are our only hope now. How can you get so depressed ? Did you hear anything about Ram and Laskhamn in forest ? Get up my son, as we all look towards you for our support.” After sometime Bharat regained his normalcy and asked Guh to elaborate on Ram’s stay, “ Where did they lie? What did they eat ?”

Guh mentioned, “ I had offered varieties of fruits<sup>4</sup> and drinks (2-87-14/15) but didn’t take any of them on the plea that he was not permitted to enjoy luxurious life style. In the dusk time all of them maintained silence and offered worship. Thereafter Lakskaman brought *kush* grass and prepared their bed under the *Ingudi* tree. Ram and Sita took water only brought by Lakshaman. Lakshaman also remained on the balance water. Thereafter, Lakshaman washed their feet and they slept on the *kush* bed. Lakshaman equipped himself with bow, arrows, and quiver on back maintained vigil walking at a distance from them. I also with my bow and arrows remained with Lakshaman. “

<sup>4</sup> Nishad raj, Guha’s statement here confirms the roots and fruits being the food items of Ram (2-87-14/15), and not the meat and fish, as interpreted by some commentators at various places in Valmiki Ramayan. One given word in Sanskrit carries different connotations, and to understand that one has to adopt properly composed devotional mind set and matured linguistic knowledge.

## 2-88 Bharat vowed an ascetic life style (30 / 3292)

Accompanied by his ministers Bharat visited the *Ingudi* tree where Ram had slept. He closely noticed the impressions of their body discernible from the profile of the *kush* bed. He could find out some silk threads stuck up with the grass which must have been of Sita. He appreciated the luck of Lakshaman who followed him in forest. He again expressed his resolve to get him back to throne with Lakshaman, and instead he accompanied by Shatrughn would remain in forest for the specified period of his exile. If he didn't oblige him, he would follow his footsteps in forest until his stay."

Bharat revealed his another resolve, "From now onwards I shall also remain in ascetics life style taking only fruits and roots wearing bark on the body."

## 2-89 Bharat crossed the *Ganga* ( 23 / 3315)

The night passed away, and Bharat awaking Shatrughn spoke, "It is morning time, now get up and go to Guh who could help us in getting across the *Ganga*. Shatrughn getting up mentioned, " I was not sleeping, rather I continued reflection on Ram." They were thus engaged in talk that Guh appeared and spoke to Bharat, "On the bank of the sacred *Ganga*, you must have spent a pleasant night." Bharat expressing obligation for his careful hospitality requested him to arrange the ferry to go across the *Ganga*.

Guh rushed to his men and arranged five hundred boats in no time. People were conveniently taken to the other side. Vashishath and other royal priests had boarded the boats before Bharat, Shatrughn and royal mothers. The learned Brahmins leaving their bullock carts boarded the boats. Elephants guided by their pilots crossed the *Ganga* swimming as if winged mountains were steering through water. Some preferred to swim, and some used the rafts and earthen pots. Some of the sailors' kinsmen of the boats after leaving the people on the other shore crossed back using toy rafts made of bamaboo.

Having reached the other side of the *Ganga*, they moved to *pryag*, and in auspicious period of *maitra muhurth* (2-89-21) they reached the place of sage Bhardwaj. Leaving behind the troops, Bharat with Vashishath proceeded to see the holy sage Bhardwaj.

## 2-90 Bharat at Bhardwaj ashram ( 24 / 3339)

When the ashram was about one *kosa* away Bharat left the troops and entourage behind and with Vashishath he entered Bhardwaj ashram. Having seen, Vashishath, Bhardwaj came forward and greeted him with respect offering *arghya*.

After receiving the salutation from Bharat he offered them fruits and water. Bharat was introduced as son of Dasarath. Bhardwaj enquired about the welfare of the state of Ayodhya, its people, its treasury etc. Vashishath attending to them to be well, enquired from Bhardwaj about the status of ashram for the sacred sacrifices, disciples, trees, birds etc.

Having attended to Vashishath's enquiry Bhardwaj spoke to Bharat, "Does your arrival here has got some administrative purpose. Ram, the virtuous one, along with his wife Sita, and brother Lakshaman, have been banished, on words of a woman to forest. May I know, whether you intend to do now any harm to them and possess the state forever." These words of Bhardwaj shocked Bharat. He mentioned, "If the blessed sage of your

stature has this impression about me, I am dead and is of no worth.” With eyes full of tears Bharat submitted, “I am not a party to the episode. I had never been taken in confidence for that. I don’t support the action of Kaikeyi. I have come to take back Ram to Ayodhya and offer him the throne.”

Bhardwaj consoled Bharat, “Although I knew your mind, my blunt and harsh enquiry is to enhance your image.”

Bharat further requested the sage to help him in locating Ram. Bhardwaj mentioned, “Ram is now staying in Chitrakoot.” I would advise and like that you take rest here tonight and move to Ram tomorrow morning.

## 2-91 Bhardwaj hospitality (84 / 3423)

When Bharat greed to stay, the sage asked him to bring his army to the *ashram* and wondered as to why he left his army away from the *ashram*. Bharat politely submitted, “The elephants and horses would have caused damage to the *ashram* and therefore they were to stay away from here.” On the insistence of Bhardwaj he got the troops to ashram.

In the meanwhile, Bhardwaj arriving at the fire place of the *ashram* sipped water (which is a resolving rite for ascetics) and invoked *Viswakarma* to attend the need of the people and the troops accompanying Bharat. He also invoked three gods in-charge of world (*yam, varun, kuber*) and *Indr* to keep the guests happy. He wished rivers of all quarters be present here and they should provide all sorts of soft and sweet drinks to the guests. He invoked celestial musicians *viswavasus, haha* and *huhu* to attend the guests. The celestial dancers invited were *ghrithachi, viswachi, mishra keshi, alambusha, nagdanta, hema, and hima*. The celestial garden presided by *kuber* in the northern region of *kuru* to provide instant cloths, ornaments and fruits were invoked. Moon god the presiding deity of plants was invoked to provide all varieties of food, drink and fruits.

All the gods thus invoked by him visited his place. Cool and scented breeze from *malay* swept the ashram. The cloud hovered with shower of flowers over the ashram. The troops got accommodation in duly leveled area spread over a measure of five *yojan* where emerald green carpets were laid. Varieties of trees bearing *bilba, kapitha, amala*, jack fruit and mango appeared in abundance. Horses and elephants got places covered with high arches.

Palaces furnished fully appeared to facilitate comfortable stay of the people. Bharat entered with his ministers, priests and Brahmins to such a palace. He found a royal seat with umbrella. Going around in reverence, as if Ram had occupied that, he took a *chavar* and took a seat. Then arrived there twenty thousand female attendants from *Brahma*, another twenty thousand female attendants from *Kuber*. The celestial musicians *narad, tumbur* and *gopa* presented their programs before Bharat. The celestial dancers *alambusha, mishrakeshi, pundrika, and vamana* presented their dances. The flowers of celestial *chitrarath* grove were found present in the palace. The *bilba* tree tuned into a *mridunga* (drum beater), *bibhitika* tree used cymbals, *peepal* tree turned a dancer. Other trees viz., *tilaka, tal* (palm), *tamal, deodara* turned into entertaining form of hunch-backs. The trees *Shimshupa, malati, malika, jathi, and jambu* were also seen among the dancer groups. The dancers also ushered the people to take varieties of food and drinks available.

The animals were served with varieties of fodder, honey coated cereals and water.

For each seven / eight persons, there were one charming feminine attendant, who provided all sorts of pastes, soaps, and oil for their bath. Those attendants also served them towels and wiped their moist body. The troops and people were so engrossed in comforts and provisions that they expressed their good-bye to Ayodhya as well as Dandak and at the same time glorified Bharat and Ram for the rare pleasure they derived from that stay.

The night of gala and pleasure passed out like dream. It was all due to divine capability of the sage Bhardwaj. It is learnt that the trees, ponds, wells and water bodies had transformed with divine power into various facilities and provisions.

## **2-92 Bharat took leave of Bhardwaj ( 39 / 3462)**

In the morning when the sage was performing fire oblations, Bharat with folded hands, sought leave to move out. Sage enquired about their stay comfort. Bharat replied positively, "we got rare relaxation and satisfaction."

Bharat enquired about the exact location of Ram. The sage mentioned, "About three and half *yojan* from here is Chitrakoot mountain, with Mandakini flowing to its north. Once you are at Mandikini, take either left and then south, or go south from there, you will find the shelter of Ram."

Before leaving three mothers Kauslya, Sumitra and Kaikeyi came to offer salutation to the holy feet of the sage. When asked for introduction by the sage, Bharat introduced them one by one, "The one thin but resplendent like Aditi who gave birth to Upendra (Vaman), is Kausalya, the mother of Ram. Like *karnika* tree with pale creepers, on left of Kausalya is Sumitra mother of two illustrious brothers Lakshaman and Shatrughn. Kaikeyi, my mother, who couldn't find her wishes fulfilled is the third one and she is root-cause of the misfortune."

Bhardwaj spoke, "Never worry about this and she should not be always accused. To me it seems the exile is for the benefit of sages, gods and demons and final outcome is going to be pleasant."

Bharat giving respectful round to the sage moved out seeking his blessings. With his movement in palanquin, began the movement of all the troops, and his accompanying entourage. The movement of the troops caused a great stir in the forest area along with a discernible cloud of dust from a distance.

## **2-93 Bharat in search of Ram's ashram (27 / 3489)**

As the people moved forward towards Chitrakoot, the forest got perceptibly stirred by the trampling caused by movement of elephants, horses and chariots. The wild animals deer, antelopes and birds, getting scared of the rare scene, were running here and there. The cloud of dust from horses' hoofs was a rare scene but it was swiftly being taken away by wind causing no discomfort to the moving entourage.

The passing natural scene was charming for its greenery and chirping of birds. The scattered groves of trees and springs had added to the natural and impressive beauty.

Getting wearied of long travel, Bharat spoke to Vashishath, "As indicated by the sage Bhardwaj we appear to have reached our destination. Here is river *mandakini*, and the peak in the background must be of Chitrakoot."

Bharat then asked some of his troops to move around and find out the location of the ashram of our beloved righteous Ram. Soon they pointed out to a column of smoke rising from one of the peaks. Bharat asked others to wait there, and he accompanied by Sumantr and his spiritual preceptor Dhriti moved towards the landmark of the smoke.

## **2-94 Ram and Sita engaged in watching *Chitrakoot* (27 / 3516)**

After staying for sometime in *Chitrakoot*, Ram got impressed by the natural beauty of place. He pointed out one by one to Sita, “ Look at the silver white place, flanked by red and blue spots. The trees are covered with delicious colorful fruits and berries. No quarter can be seen without varieties of fragrant flowers. The animals of all species are found to live here in friendly way. The cluster of trees and springs of water are the specific features of this place. This place looks like *Alaka* of Kuber and *Amravati* of Indr, two combined in one. By coming to this place I have forgotten all my worries. The stay at this place has given us two things simultaneously: reputation of honoring the father’s words, and rare experience of relaxation.”

He further mentioned, “The *Chitrakoot* mountain appears to have blossomed out of the mother earth’s womb.”

## **2-95 Ram described the scene of *Mandakini* to Sita (19 / 3535)**

Turning towards river *mandakini* Ram elaborated to Sita, “ See the colorful sands on the river banks. The varieties of birds have flocked on the expanding sands. Swans and other words don’t intend to leave the river shores. The monkeys are coming to enjoy cool and crystal water. The trees on the banks have shed leaves as if mounts of *Chitrakoot* have danced along the river shores. See how matted hair ascetics are bathing happily wearing barks and deer skin. The sages find rare pleasure, with raised arms, offering oblation to sun god from flowing stream of *mandakini* . I take *chitrakoot* identical to Ayodhya. The sages and natural entities are the people, and *mandakini* is *saryu*. Staying here I never crave for Ayodhya. What a lovely place !

## **2-96 Bharat’s troops caught Ram’s attention ( 30 / 3565)**

Sita had felt hungry, and Ram gave her a piece of cooked root.<sup>5</sup> In the meantime he could notice the panic among the animals. Wild buffalo, deer and tigers were running in scare. He could soon realize the movement of large troops and rattle of chariots. Ram advised Lakshaman to find out the identity of the troops.

Lakshaman climbing a *sal* tree shouted, “Get ready. Keep Sita to a safe place. Put out the fire and smoke from here. I could see the troops of Bharat hoisting *kovidara* tree banner over the chariot. He is here at our threshold to eliminate both of us. Today I would teach him and his mother the true lesson. Killing both of them I could quench fire of revenge lit in my heart for long time.”

## **2-97 Lakshaman brought to reasons ( 31 / 3596)**

Ram could immediately realize the situation. He reproached Lakshaman, “ Don’t be fool and take Bharat motive otherwise. He is dear to me than my life. If he is here, it is most

<sup>5</sup> Some commentator has mistaken this as a meat piece.

appropriate of him. He could have been coming here in dissent to his mother to give me back my crown. If you are so desirous of kingdom, I would ask him to transfer that crown to you.”

Hearing Ram, Lakshman sensed the gravity of the situation and his blunder in assessing Bharat. He changed his mind and began, “To me it seems father Dasarath himself has come. He might come to take back Sita who had never been in such harsh condition. I could see the *shtrunjaya* elephant aged to our father, but the symbol of his royalty the white umbrella is missing.”

Ram advised Lakshman to climb down the tree. Lakshman coming down stood by side of Ram.

## 2-98 Anxious Bharat (13 / 3609)

Bharat had become very anxious to see Ram at the earliest. He advised Shatrughn, and Sumantr to search around, and find out the righteous Ram. He himself also moved around on foot in his search. He expressed, “Lakshman is really fortunate who got chance to serve him in forest. Sita has performed her natural duty to the husband. The forest of chitrakoot has got benefitted by his presence. I won’t find peace unless I see the royal crown over his head consecrated by sacred water.”

## 2-99 Union of brothers (42 / 3651)

Praying Vashishath to move with mothers, Bharat kept searching Ram. He saw the mountain and the river Mandakini as indicated by the sage Bhardwaj. He was sure to be at correct place. Looking around when he moved he found indications of Ram staying nearby. The tufts of *kush* grass were seen tied to the trees along the track. He could guess, “To identify the right route, Lakshman could have done that. This would have helped them during dark hours.

Reflecting thus he was moving forward and his eyes fell on a hut made of leaves. He paced fast, and lo and behold!, he got the glimpse of Ram squatted on the ground right leg resting on the left knee. He saw Lakshman and Sita around him. His eyes were fixed on the charming glimpse of Ram, “An ascetic with matted hair, beaming face, lion like shoulders, wide open chest, long arms, cloud-hued body.” He became guilty conscious, “The one who had grown with royal facilities, but is now in an ascetic dress and style in forest. This has happened only because of me.” With eyes blind with tears and voice choked, he could utter only, “Arya (the noble one)” ,and fell short of his feet.

Shatrughn following him, fell on Ram’s feet. Soon they were all embracing each other with tears drenching their shoulders. Their tears brought tears to the eyes of all the wild beings around them. Soon Sumantr and Guh saw them, as if sun and moon were in conjunction with Venus and Jupiter.

## 2-100 Enquiry about the state (76 / 3727)

Initially Ram was unable to recognize Bharat lying before him on ground. He had become lean and he was having matted hair and bark cloths. Picking him up, he smelt his head (as mark of affection), and taking him on his lap spoke, “Why did you come to forest, when father is alive? I have seen you after a long time but you have become lean. Is our valiant father well, or on his departure to heaven, you have come here ? Is the kingdom intact or in danger ? Do you respect the Brahmins and elders including our

family priest (Vashishath)? Do Brahmins assigned the duty of ritual oblation to fire keep you punctually informed ? Are mothers Kauslya and Sumitra well? How about the queen Kaikeyi? Do you respect the great **archer Sudhanva** who is well versed in using shafts with and without invoking *mantra* and is good in economics (political science 2-100-14)? I believe you must not be oversleeping, and in the later part of the night, must have been contemplating over the actions ahead. I also presume that you must have been taking counsel from the able ministers assigning duties to their abilities. I trust, your well thought out plans are not leaked before they materialize. You must have been paying the salary and wages to royal servants and ministers in time unless otherwise that makes them corrupt. The income of the state must have been more than expenses. You must have been using three independent spies to keep vigil on eighteen functionaries of your enemy states, and fifteen functionaries of your own state (2-100-36). You must not have been trapped by greedy Brahmins who plead quoting scriptures but are selfish. The great dynastic state is rich in irrigated cultivation, and a well settled city of Ayodhya, and you must have been careful to them. Agriculture and livestock rearing (2-100-47 / 48), being very crucial for prosperity, must have been duly attended. Women must have been given due protection. The ministers must have been impartial in dealing with contention between a rich and a poor. Someone accused of misbehavior or misappropriation must not have been penalized in haste unless confirmed by the counsel of legal experts. You must have been polite, affectionate and liberal in charity to elders, children and physician. Your due attention must have been given to respect of Brahmins, gods, the groves at squares of the city (*chaitya*) (2-100-61), and the learned people. You must have been attentive to the balance of *arth* (possessing wealth), *dharm* (spiritual service), and *kam* (physical comfort) in the assigned hours of your daily life. There are **fourteen don'ts** for a king: atheism, speaking a lie, anger, unmindful state, delaying tendency, ignoring the wise, laziness, indulgence to sensual delight, solitary decision, consulting unqualified people, deferring the commencement of planned works, divulge plans before action, lack of auspicious actions and words, and rising to all enemies at one time. You must have been aware of ten evils, five crucial securities, four royal strategies, seven stately constituents, eight associates of anger (or variously eight development disciplines) (2-100-68/70), and other abiding royal duties." He further wished to confirm, "Bharat, you must have been toeing the great trend set by our renowned forefathers."

## 2-101 Bharat wished to crown Ram (26 / 3753)

Both Ram and Lakshaman enquired from Bharat, "Why did you wear ascetics dress with matted hair, and why did you come to forest ?" Ram again embraced Bharat and repeated his excited query. Bharat with folded hands submitted, "The king couldn't bear your separation and has departed to heavenly abode. Honouring the words of queen Kaikeyi he earned disrepute in the world. My mother Kaikeyi, now a widow couldn't reap the fruits of kingdom sought for me. I am here to anoint you king which is due to you as per succession practice. Now you have to provide succor to the widow queens and the entire world."

Discarding the mantle of sovereignty, Ram spoke to Bharat, "It is our abiding duty to honour the command of father. We also have to be subservient to our mother. The king assigned two distinct functions to both of us. You have been assigned the crown, and for me living for fourteen years in Dandak forest has been his command. Both of us have to be true to his service, and let us strive to maintain his reputation."

**2-102 Bharat repeated his request ( 9 / 3762)**

Tearful Bharat again submitted, "The crown belongs to the eldest son. The family tradition does not allow to overrule this practice. You may not be aware, the king was so deeply hurt with your departure with Lakshaman and Sita that he couldn't survive the shock. It is now most pertinent time for you to come to Ayodhya and protect the kingdom which belongs to you only."

He further mentioned, "I and Shatrughna had already offered water oblations to the soul of departed father. It is now your term to offer water to him. You had been most affectionate to him, and while dying he was fully immersed in your memory."

**2-103 Mourning for father ( 49 / 3811)**

The grief of death of father gripped Ram so deeply that he fell with extended hands on ground. His brothers while raising consoled him. His wails carried his expression, "Ayodhya without the king is not worth visiting. Even if I complete the term of exile I would prefer to be away from Ayodhya. My father used to encourage me with sweet words, now who will do that for me." Ram with eyes flowing tears wept loudly, "O, Sita! Your father-in-law is no more. O, Lakshaman ! you are now shorn of the affections of father. Bharat has brought this sorrowful news." Sita was also weeping. After a while the brothers consoling Ram asked to move for offering water oblations.

Soon the pulp of Ingudi tree was arranged for oblation. Ram putting new barks as the lower and upper garments, keeping Sita in front, Lakshaman on second postition, toed towards the Mandakini river from the rear.

Sumantr holding the hand of Ram helped him in descending to the flowing stream. Facing south Ram offered palm-full of water in oblation to his father uttering, "O, father ! this water of respect oblation may reach you where you are with forefathers." Ram then ascended to the bank of Mandakini and offered oblation containing pulp of Ingudi tree mixed with that of plum laid over a layer of *kush* (blade of special grass with pointed tips used for rituals) and mentioned, "Accept this offer of food. This is the food I take, and it is said, the food one takes is considered to be the best oblation to god. (2-103-30)"

Thereafter he moved to the mountain of Chitrakoot towards his hermitage. Arriving at the hermitage, the **Lord<sup>6</sup>** of the universe (2-103-32), Ram embraced Bharat, and all the brothers began wailing loudly. The mourning was so loud and terrifying that all the wild animals: boars, elephants, tigers, deer and others were scared. They began leaving with commotion for another adjoining forest. The birds got scared too, and soon the sky was full with their flutters.

The commotion got noticed by the troops accompanying Bharat halted away from the hermitage. They moved towards the hermitage. Some took horses to hasten the movement, some took chariot, where as the young and able ones took on foot. While moving they kept cursing Kaikeyi and Manthara for the state of affairs. When they

<sup>6</sup> This is a clear expression of supreme divinity of Ram, contrary to common saying that Valmiki had portrayed Ram as a dignified human being than as an incarnation of supreme spirit.



arrived on the hermitage, some were embraced by Ram, while some offered their respect to him from a distance.

#### 2-104 Mothers at the hermitage (32 / 3843)

Anxious Vashishath, following the queens moved to the hermitage. On way Kasalya got a glimpse of the Mandakini river flowing in the eastern part of the forest of Chitrakoot. Imagining forest life of carrying water from the river to the hermitage she got gripped with grief. Thinking aloud she mentioned, "Lakshaman must have been carrying water from here for his righteous brother. Now he would be relieved of such duty (as she expected to take back Ram to Ayodhya)." Moving further she noticed the balls of Ingudi and plum over *kush* (with its pointed tips towards south). She could immediately realized, "Ram has offered that as oblation to his father. She was immersed in grief as the king was offered the forest food of Ram, Ingudi and plum. "How can a *chakravarti* monarch like Dasarath could be able to accept the wild food in oblation?", tormented her mind further. Reflecting with remorse over the state of affairs she reached the hermitage and spotted the ascetic Ram with brothers. Her eyes were in tears. Ram came forward and holding her feet offered the salutation. All the queens were thus respected by Ram, and their hands wiped the dust from the shoulder and back of Ram.

Tearful Lakshaman, following Ram, offered the salutation to the mothers. When Sita with tears in her eyes were holding their feet, cursing the destiny, they embraced her, "O, Sita! My beloved one, you are the daughter of king Janak, daughter-in-law of Dasarath, and wife of Ram, and you have been put to face such a tough forest life."

Ram moving forward held the feet of *guru* Vashishath. Offering him a seat, he sat by his side. All others occupied their seat accordingly. The august gathering had great expectation from Bharat whose presence was noticed as glowing sacrificial fire among his companions.

#### 2-105 Bharat prayed Ram again (46 / 3889)

The mourning continued immersing people in deep grief for the full night. The dawn came and after attending the normal ritual at Mandakini they all gathered at Ram's place. Breaking the silence, Bharat in remorseful voice submitted to Ram, "You are great that you obliged my mother by offering the crown to me. Now I return the same to you. Kindly accept it and protect us from this calamity."

Having heard grieved Bharat, Ram consoled him mentioning, "The journey of life in this mundane world is not under one's own control. One can't get what he desires. The cycle of life and death is unending. People keep on gathering and disbursing. Union and separation, rise and fall are inevitable to happen. One's own wife and offspring come together in a given span of life like coming together of logs floating over sea waves, as they are again separated by the surfing water. Life is getting shorter moment by moment. Either stay at home or be on journey, the life is incrementally reducing. The end of life (called death) walks with us as we walk, it sits with us as we sit, and one day at the appointed moment the inevitable happens, i.e., death ends our life. One should care about oneself and not about others. Our life is like flowing water, similar to passing of days and nights, and never returns the same way. The world is a dynamic caravan; even if one is stationed on wayside, he is bound to follow the caravan subsequently. We all are destined to follow the departure route of forefathers. One enjoys the day break,

the onset of new season, but the continuing aging get closer and closer to the end (death). Our father has reached heaven by dint of his sacrifices in life. **Discarding his mortal remains, he now freely walks in the supreme domain<sup>7</sup> of utmost bliss (2-105-37).** The life in current state has to be rejoiced and celebrated and not to be grieved for inevitable. You need not lament any more over father's death. Get back to the city of Ayodhya and follow his command of looking after the state. I shall follow his command to remain in forest until the assigned term comes to its close."

## 2-106 Bharat pleaded in vain ( 35 / 3924)

Hearing the resolve of Ram, Bharat again spoke to him, "You are steadfast in sorrow and joy. I am younger to you in all respects. My mother's sin can't be reversed. Father is also being blamed for yielding to a woman, though he fulfilled his commitment to Kaikeyi. I had never been informed about all these. Now you alone can reverse the blemishes of the family and protect the state. Guru Vashishath is here, and right now the auspicious crowning can be solemnized. Kindly accept the crown. If you reject this offer and our prayer, I shall follow you in Dandak forest."

Ram was firm on his resolve. The people accompanying Bharat were distressed when Ram rejected his offer.

## 2-107 Ram's firmness ( 19 / 3943)

Ram applauded Bharat for his noble thought, and mentioned, "Our duty is to obey the king's command and make the queen Kaikeyi happy who wanted to see you on the throne. **When Kaikeyi was married to Dasarath, the king pledged the kingdom to her as a marriage gift (2-107-3).** Later, pleased by the courageous assistance of Kaikeyi in the conflict of gods and demons he granted two boons. Under those boons you got the throne of Ayodhya and I was given Danadak forest. I sincerely advise you to abide by the righteousness and rule over the state of Ayodhya, while I would be a ruler of wild beings in Dandak forest."

Ram further quoted from scriptures, "Long back a king named Gaya had performed sacrifices in honour of his ancestors at Gaya (**2-107-11**). The king Gaya had then mentioned, " A true *putra* (son) is the one who provides *tran* (protection) to ancestors against hell named *put*. Among several pious and religious sons, at least one having intense affection to the parents, comes to Gaya for offering sacrifice to secure liberation to the ancestors." Now you need to follow this and save the father from hell by remaining firm and true to his commands to us. Under this command you go with Shatrughn to Ayodhya and I with Lakshman and Sita shall proceed into Dandak forest."

## 2-108 Jabali pleaded for crown (18 / 3961)

Jabali was a learned Brahmin from Ayodhya. He pleaded to Ram to accept the crown and enjoy the state of Ayodhya, "In this world no one is related to anybody. Every

<sup>7</sup> This indicates that a finite soul (*jeev*) can't transform into an infinite self (*Ishwar*). At the most, it can get closer to the infinite spirit and enjoy the state of blessedness.

individual is an entity. Father and mother are temporary stoppage to a wander finding a village at night. In the morning he leaves the village and continues the journey. Likewise, your relation to Dasarath has ended, and as advised by Bharat accept the crown. He pleaded to prove the futility of relation and therefore a commitment to futile relation does not mean anything. What is unseen in other world, should not be believed, rather what is present in this world should be honoured. Can sacrificial food offered to a dead reach him ? It is doubtful. If someone is travelling, then food offered in his name as a sacrificial action away from him, should have nourished him, but it is not the case. Trust the present and forget the myth beyond this world. It is time to accept the crown and honour the offer of Bharat.”

### **2-109 Ram refuted Jabali (39 / 4000)**

Hearing the words of Jabali, the learned Brahmin, Ram spoke, “I believe in truth. For a truthful person everything is attainable by its true following. In fact, Truth is god and it is the basis of all scriptures, austerities, sacrifices and religious practices. My father observed truthfulness to queen Kaikeyi. I vowed to keep his words. Now how can I deny that truth and get back to Ayodhya ! I can’t do that. I would stay in forest to honour the truthfulness of my father.”

Ram further mentioned, “All sacrifices and oblations have been offered earlier and continued now have been without any expectation either in this world or in the next. This is what Brahmins and Vedas speak to us.”

Hearing the firm refutation of Ram, Jabali mentioned, “My earlier spoken advice was to take you back to Ayodhya. I do follow Vedas, and never advise to violate that.”

### **2-110 Vashishath’s advice ( 36 / 4036)**

Hearing the discourses between Jabali and Ram, Vashishath picked up the thread, “Jabali knows this world and the other world fully well. Let me briefly cover the genesis of creation. Initially it was water all around. In water took place the formation of earth. There appeared Brahma as a self born creation. Narayan assuming the form of a boar (*varah*) provided stability and safe space to earth to sustain the future creation. Brahma created Marichi, who created Kashyap. From Kashyap was created Sun. Manu was created from Sun. From Manu came Ikshavaku, and he got from Manu the entire earth very prosperous and fertile. He became the first king of Ayodhya. The successive family tree from Ikshavaku is: Kukshi, Vikushi, Ban, Anarnya, Prithu, Trishanku (who rose alive to heaven adhering to truth), Dhundhumar, Yuvnashva, Mandhata, Susandhi, Dhruvasandhi (and his brother was Prsenjit).

From Dhruvasandhi was born Bharat, and he got his son Asit. The enemies of Asit were Haihaya, Taljanga, and Sashibindava who drove Asit out of the royal possession. Asit became a sage staying in mountains. His two wives were pregnant. One wife, with jealousy gave poison to other co-wife (Kalindi). Kalindi once went to forest where she met the sage Chyavan (of Bhrgu race). The sage blessed her to be mother of a valiant son who would redeem the royal dignity. Subsequently she gave birth to a shining son with charm of a lotus flower. He was born with poison ( **स + गर** ), so he was called Sagar. He caused the digging up earth, and his son was Asamanj who was banished by him for his notorious terrible activity.

Ansuman was son of Asamanj, who was blessed with a son called Dilip. Dilip's son, was Bhagirath, who became father of **Kakutastha** (usually used to address the nobility of the family). From Kakutastha was born **Raghu** whose name is also used popularly to address the dignified personality of this race as **Raghav**. From him came Pravridha, who was variously called Purushadak, Kalmashpad, and Saudas. His son was Shankhan who was killed while fighting enemies. His son was Sudarshan and the further lineage is Agnivarna, Shighrag, Maru, Prashushruv, Ambrish, Nahush, and Nabhag. Two sons: Aja and Suvrat were born to Nabhag. From Aja was born Dasarath.

Vashishath continued, "Ram, you being the eldest son of Dasarath, has the duty to protect the prosperous heritage of your father. In *raghuvansh*, by tradition, the eldest son has been the king. You need to observe the glorious tradition."

## 2-111 Ram firm on forest life (32 / 4068)

Vashishath mentioned, "One has got three mentors: father, mother and preceptor. I being the preceptor of your family, including your father and you, I would never advise you to violate the path of virtue. What Bharat has said has merit, and you need to accept his proposal. You would be serving the people, who came accompanying Bharat. You would discharge truthful duty to aging mother as well."

Hearing Vashishath, Ram submitted, "I have a vow to honour my father's words to queen Kaikeyi."

Realizing the firm resolve of Ram, Bharat looked to Sumantr and advised him, "Please arrange to bring *kush* grass, and lay it here. I would now lie down before Ram's hermitage on fast unto death." While Sumantr looked to Ram, Bharat himself collected the *kush* grass and spread over there. Ram interfered his actions and spoke to him, "Such action suits to a *Brahmin*, but not to a *kshatriya*. Bharat, get up and proceed to Ayodhya to honour the father's words."

Helpless Bharat looked towards the people accompanying him to urge Ram to get back to Ayodhya. Those people had by now understood the firmness of Ram and they consoled Bharat, "Ram is a righteous person and is of firm resolve. He won't oblige you as he is committed to honour the words of his father."

Bharat lost the hope of help from his people. On Ram's initiative he rose and touching water he again proposed firmly, "Fine, to honour the father's words, one of us has to be in forest, and it is me who would undertake the term of exile on behalf of Ram. Let Ram give me this responsibility."

Ram didn't agree to his proposal and mentioned, "It is immutable. The words of the king had been very clear: crown to Bharat, and exile to me. I assure you to get back after the term of exile, and take over the responsibility of crown to be duly assisted by you in the state activities."

## 2-112 Bharat left with *paduka* ( 31 / 4099)

While Bharat and Ram were busy in discourses, great sages, *sidhha*, and *gandharva* (celestial beings) had gathered both visible and invisible state. Their concern was the

early end of Ravan (2-112-4) and therefore they addressed Bharat, "Both of you are virtuous and worthy sons of Dasarath. Ram is right in his commitment to honor the words of his father. It is better for you to take care of Ayodhya as enjoined by your father." Bharat had no option, and he lying on Ram's feet offered to prayer, "I won't be able to rule such a vast and great royal state. I need due support from you. Kindly place your both lotus feet over this pair of wooden *paduka* which will guide me as a care taker of the state."

He also mentioned with full emotion, "I also like to put these words to you that if you don't get back to Ayodhya on the very following day of the end of fourteen years, I would enter into fire forever."

Ram obliged Bharat by touching the *paduka* with his feet and bade a farewell to Bharat and Shatrughn embracing close to his chest, and mentioned, "Never get angry to mother Kaikeyi. I take swear from you in the name of Lakshaman and Sita." Bharat giving rounds to Ram, with his *paduka* over his head, left for Ayodhya.

He also bade farewell to all the people of Ayodhya accompanying Bharat. Ram couldn't speak words of farewell to mothers, nor they could utter any words to him, and seeing each other with tearful eyes they departed. Ram offering them salutations entered his hermitage with tears in his eyes."

### 2-113 Salutations to Bhardwaj ( 24 / 4123)

The sages Vashishath, Jabali and others left preceding Bharat. Both the brothers, Bharat and Shatrughn mounting the chariot left from the eastern side of Mandakini giving a round of the Chitrakoot mountain. Soon they arrived at the hermitage of *maharshi* Bhardwaj. When they went to offer their salutation to the holy feet of the sage, he asked, "Could you see Ram ?" Bharat replying in affirmative mentioned, "He has firm resolve to honour the words of the father Dasarath. I with *guru* Vashishath tried to persuade him but he didn't relent. On the instance of *guru* Vashishath, when I put a pair of *paduka* for touch of his holy feet, he did oblige me, and now I am carrying the holy *paduka* as a symbol of his royal regency."

Bhardwaj applauded the righteousness of Bharat and gave credits to the worthy king Dasarath who had been fortunate in getting such great sons. Taking the permission of the sage Bhardwaj to leave, Bharat left crossing *Yamuna*, and soon he crossed the river *Ganga*. When he saw towards Ayodhya from Shirngberpur, he was again gripped by the remorseful thought, "The city of Ayodhya appears desolate from here as it is devoid of the presence of affectionate father and righteous brother."

### 2-114 Desolate Ayodhya ( 29 / 4152)

When his chariot moved towards Ayodhya, he found the city, "as *rohini* afflicted by *rahu*; an extinguished sacrificial fire left with ash; flower creeper hosting bees attacked by forest fire; cats and owls walking freely; squares of the roads devoid of fragrance of incense and sandal and host of other inauspicious signs."

Addressing his charioteer, he continued mentioning about all the inauspicious look of the city.

When he entered his father's chamber, he felt as if he was in a lion's cave deserted by the mighty lion.

**2-115 Bharat at Nandigram (27 / 4179)**

Having lodged back his mothers at Ayodhya, Bharat submitted to *guru* Vashishath, “ I would not get peace, until I leave Ayodhya, and continue staying at the village Nandigram.” His proposal got soon met the consent of Vashishath and royal ministers. Bharat riding a chariot with *paduka* in his possession arrived at Nandigram. He was joined by his ministers and Brahmins along with *guru* Vashishath. He enthroned the *paduka* and offered all royal respect of umbrella and fanning *chawar* to the *paduka*. He himself assumed the garb of an ascetic with matted hair and barks over the body. He remained at Nandigram counting the days of return of Ram. He used to enjoy the imagination of welcoming return of Ram and crowning him over the royal throne. Whatever small or big gifts he received, he first offered them to the holy *paduka*, and thus he continued functioning as the regent representative of Ram.

**2-116 Sages alarmed Ram ( 26 / 4205)**

After the departure of Bharat to Ayodhya, Ram noticed flutter among the sages at Chitrakoot. He enquired one of them, who appeared to be elder among them, “Do you feel any fault in my behavior, or Lakshaman had been disrespectful to the sages here ? Has Sita missed the courteous response to you? I notice something is wrong here which has caused discomfort to the sages.”

The sage mentioned the cause of their anxiety, “After your arrival here, the demons lead by Khar had become rough to all sages over entire Janasthan. They destroy our sacrificial items for oblation to fire. Often the fire is extinguished by them pouring water in the oblation squares. They also defile our place and our body by pouring objectionable items. Very freely they manifest their ugly and dreadful forms to scare us. Under such situation we have decided to desert this place and shift to another forest where fruits and roots are adequate as well. We also advise you to leave with us, as you have to be careful to the safety of Sita too.”

Ram didn't leave with them, and after bidding farewell to them came back to his hermitage.

**2-117 Arrival at Atri's *ashram* (29 / 4234)**

After the exodus of sages, Ram kept reflecting on the events, “I often get nostalgic here. This could have been contributed by the recent visit of Bharat and mothers to this place. The spoils left by the troops further divert my attention to Ayodhya.” Thus Ram decided to quit the place and in course of his movement southward he located the hermitage inhabited by Atri with his ascetic wife Ansuya.

When they saluted the sage Atri, he greeted with warmth of a father meeting the sons. Addressing his wife, Ansuya, he spoke, “Greet the daughter of Videha, Janak who is at our hermitage.” He then turned towards Ram and introduced Ansuya to them, “She is a great ascetic who protected this land from a decade long severe drought. All fruits and roots had dried up, but from her ascetic potential she created a perennial water source here. The greeneries were restored yielding enough fruits and roots. Previously she had been engaged for ten thousand years in deep and tough meditation and that has added immense potential to her. From her spiritual power she once transformed ten nights into one.” He advised Sita to get closer to her who is although very aged but free from anger.

On the initiative of Ram, Sita went close to Ansuya, who was so aged that her limbs were shaking like leaves of a banana plant. When Sita offered respectful salutation to her, introducing herself by uttering her own name, and enquiring about her welfare, Ansuya greeted her with deep affection.

Ansuya spoke to Sita, "Your conduct is appreciable that deserting the royal comfort you followed your husband in forest. For a married woman, the husband is all in all, superior to any of the gods. Wife has to obey faithfully her husband without finding any fault in his conduct. Even if the husband is poor and lacks in taking care of wife, he is venerable for wife. "

### 2-118 Ansuya blessed Sita (54 / 4288)

Welcoming the counsel of Ansuya, Sita spoke to her, "My mother after my marriage has given similar advice to me. My mother-in-law also advised me to look after the husband irrespective of the convenience and comfort being delivered from the husband. I admire your auspicious advice to me, and I am fortunate to see you here in forest."

Hearing endearing words of Sita, Ansuya offered her to seek boon from her. Sita, respectfully submitted, "With your blessings I have all what I need." Ansuya, thereafter, on her own gifted her with celestial clothes, jewels and fragrances. She mentioned, "These gifts are of celestial origin and shall remain as it is irrespective of their number of uses. You will yourself look like goddess Lakshami and your husband would appear like Vishnu."

Ansuya curiously enquired from her, "I have heard about your marriage by holding a *swyamvara*, tell me in detail about that."

Sita narrated her story, "There was a king Janak in the kingdom of Mithila. He was valiant, dutiful and righteous as well in ruling the state. Once while tilling the land, he found me as a female child coming out of the earth opened up by the tip of the flow. Taking me in his lap he called me as daughter, and soon he heard a voice from unseen object that the child is a rare one and fit to be your daughter. He handed over me to chief queen who took utmost care in rearing me up. Subsequently he was favoured with remarkable prosperity of the state. When I grew up and attained the age of marriage, the king was curious to found a matching groom."

Sita continued, "Varun, the rain god had once gifted a mighty bow and two quivers ever full of shafts. He invited a *swyamvara* of princes with a condition that Sita would accept only that person who would be able to lift the bow. None of the princes could lift the bow and they left saluting that. Later, Viswamitr arrived with Ram and Lakshaman to attend a sacrificial celebration (*ygya*) organized by my father. The sage asked my father to show the divine bow to Ram. The bow being heavy was brought by carriers. Ram picked the bow up, fixing the string tight, stretched it fully. In this process the bow broke into two pieces with a thunderous sound shaking the earth. My father was glad to find a groom for me. Ram didn't accept the offer until it was permitted by his father, king Dasarath. The king was invited to Mithila, and he gave the approval of marriage. I was married to Ram, and my sister Urmila was married to Lakshaman."

### 2-119 Ram moved forward in forest ( 22 / 4310)

Ansuya was glad to hear the story about Sita's marriage from her own mouth. Embracing Sita closely, she kissed her forehead. She pointed out to Sita about the end

of the day and onset of night, "The birds are getting back to their shelter. The hermitages of sages are seen with column of sacrificial smoke coming out in the sky. I would advise you now to go to Ram."

When Sita intended to move out, she asked her to demonstrate to her how do those cloths and jewels fit over her body. Sita obeyed her command and when she saw Sita wearing all those celestial ornaments, she was extremely delighted. Sita saluted Anusya by touching her feet, and moved where Ram was sitting.

When Ram saw Sita coming fully dressed and bejeweled, he became very glad. Sita pointed out to him that whatever she was wearing were the celestial gifts offered to her by Anusuya.

They stayed at night at Atri's ashram, and in the morning when the ascetics had offered the oblation to sacrificial fire, they left for forest. The sages and ascetics forewarned them about the willfulness of demons who were after the blood of the ascetics, and those who violated scriptural conduct by way of staying without cleaning their mouth after taking food. They advised Ram to follow the beaten track made by the local ascetics who kept visiting the forest for collecting the fruits, and forbade not to take a new route while entering into the forward forest.



Srimate Ramanujay namah**Preface**

In continuation of the earlier two submissions of *Bal kand* and *Ayodhya kand*, the third submission is of *Arnya kand*. *Arnya* marks the turning point in the events constituting the glory of *bhagwan* Ram. His test of supreme divinity is confirmed when he combated successfully the demons lead by Khar, Dushan and Trishira.

This kand is spread over 75 *sarg*, depicted originally by sage Valmiki in 2467 *sanskrit* verses (*shlok*). *Sarg* 14 covers the crisp description of the creation commencing from first *prajapati* Kardam to the last and fifteenth *prajapati* (forefather) Kashyap.

*Sarg* 38 and 47 may be useful for those who are interested in fixing the age of *bhagwan* Ram and Sita. It appears he was 12 when he was married with Sita. After marriage he stayed for 12 years in Ayodhya, and in 13 th year, i.e., at the age of 25 he was to be crowned, but for the sake of benefits of sages and gods he was exiled and resided in forest.

The physical description in *sarg* 73 / 74 of *pampa lake*, *rishyamuk* mountain, and *saptsagar theerth* is noteworthy for those who want to take a pilgrimage of *kishkindha* near Hampi, in Karnataka.

*Baal kand* has total 77 *sarg* containing 2266 *shlok*, whereas *Ayodhyaa kaand* has 119 *sarg* with total *shlok* 4310. *Arnya* as mentioned above has 75 *sarg* and 2467 *shlok*. Total cumulative sum of *shlok* of *Baalkaand*, *Ayodhyaa kaand*, and *Arnya kand* is 9043. However this includes an intermediate *sarg* comprising of 26 *shlok* which does not have a separate assigned *sarg* number and this is after *sarg* 56 describing the effort of Brahma and Indr to assist Sita in staying safely in Lanka.

**Srimann Narayan Charnau Sharnam Prapaddye. (श्रीमन्नारायण चरणौ शरणम् प्रपदे )**

Submission:

Srikrishna Prapnnachari

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*Magh shukla vasant panchmi*

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<sup>1</sup> This *sarg* is not common in several versions available of Valmiki ramayan. Geeta Press has included this incident of visiting Indr Sita in Lanka as a desirable reading material.

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*Srimate Ramanujaya namah*

## **Aranya kaand**

**(75 sarg)**

### **3-1 Hermits welcome Ram (23 / 23)**

As Ram, accompanied by his wife Sita and brother Lakshaman, moved forward in deep forest he could see the number of hermitages there. Those hermitages looked attractive by the presence of group of birds, animals and varieties of plants. The columns of smoke rising from the fire squares to offer oblations marked their vibrant presence. The hermits were seen engaged in observing *vedic* rules for offering regular and timely oblations, all aimed to achieve welfare of the common people.

Hermits could also notice the excellent personality of Ram made more attractive by the company of Sita and Lakshaman. The bows in their hands indicated their mightiness characterizing their royal lineage committed to ensure protection of the people.

Hermits offered due respect to Ram by offering place of stay and food of fruits and roots. Those hermits were so involved in their scriptural practices that they have discarded all sorts of temptation, anger and wants. Because of the state of self emancipation by meditation, they couldn't utter any curse on demons despite their several interferences in their daily life. They expected the king to secure proper protection to them. Whether Ram was in Ayodhya or in forest, they expected him to discharge his duty of a king to protect the inhabitants in his vast state.

### **3-2 Viradh grabbed Sita (26 / 49)**

Early next morning, Ram sought leave of the hermits with whom he had spent night and moved forward. He could frequently see tigers, lions, elephants, and deer crossing his way. The birds were seen on plants and trees and enjoying the fruits and roots. Thus roaming about he spotted a mountainous giant wearing deer skin soaked with blood. He was carrying a huge trident where scores heads of wild animals were found perched. The giant had a look of Ram with Sita, and Lakshaman following them as the rear guard. He moved towards them and grabbing Sita and took her up. He enquired, "You carry bow and other arms like warriors but your dress is that of ascetics. Who are you in this deceptive outlook?" He introduced himself as Viradh, and mentioned, "She will now be my wife. I satisfy my hunger with sages' flesh here, and soon I would devour both of you alive."

This happened so suddenly that Ram got a little unbalanced, and he mentioned, "Loosing Sita is the precious cost in my life. I could bear the loss of father, and grabbing of kingdom by Kaikeyi, but how can I bear such a great loss?" Lakshaman consoled him, "When I am here, no calamity would befall. I will show you the demonstration of my suppressed anger since your banishment from Ayodhya."

**3-3 Dialogue with Viradh ( 26 / 75)**

When Viradh insisted on their introduction, Ram replied, “We two brothers come from the family of *Ikshavaku*, and stay in this forest as a valiant *kshatriya*. Now you tell us your details who wander in Dandak forest so freely.”

Viradh said, “My father is demon Jav and mother is Shathruda. With my great penance I have been blessed by Brahma that no weapon would be able to cut or pierce through me. You forget this woman and both of immediately go back the way you have come. I will not take your life.”

Ram got full of anger and reproaching him for his meanness charged seven shafts over him. Although Viradh enjoyed the boon, he was hurt by the arrows, and putting Sita over ground, he ran with his trident to attack them. Ram very swiftly cut his trident which fell on ground like two mighty mountains. Both the brothers rushed their attack on him with their swords, but he picked them up and keeping on his shoulder moved deep into the forest. Ram sitting on his shoulder allowed him to take them away with an intention to gather better information about that forest.

**3-4 Viradh killed by burying (34 / 109)**

Sita began crying seeing them being taken away by the demon. Both the brothers thought of killing him without further delay. Ram broke his right arm, while Lakshaman broke the left arm. The demon fell on the ground. Both tossed him up and down several times but he was alive. Ram asked Lakshaman to dig a ditch to bury him.

Viradh recalled his curse and spoke to Ram, “ Now I understand you are Ram and he is your brother Lakshaman. The woman is your consort Vaidehi, Sita. Once I was delayed in attending the service of Kuber (*Vaishnavan*) due to my lusty association with Rambha. He cursed me to become a demon, but also mentioned that I would be free of my curse by Ram only. I am a *gandharva* and my name is Tumburu. You know I have a boon of not being killed by any weapon, therefore I would die only by burying which you are doing. Besides, it is customary for demons for being buried at the end of life. I advise you to see a sage called Sharbhang, staying about one and half *yojan* from here. He would guide you further in this forest.”

On preparation of the ditch by Lakshaman, when Viradh was being forcibly dumped in the ditch he created terrific sound. Ultimately he was buried with full coverage of earth over him, and he died.

Ram taking Sita along, happily continued his journey further in the forest.

**3-5 Ram at ashram of the sage Sharbhang (43/ 152)**

Consoling Sita, and encouraging Lakshaman, Ram referred to the toughness of the forest life. While they were nearly close to Sharbhang *ashram*, Ram saw the brilliant shining chariot of Indr (chief of gods) surrounded and attended by hundreds of gods.

They were stationed just above the *ashram* and the chariot of Indr had green horses. The attending gods were charming and young (25 yrs) and it is said gods always look young of this age. Ram pointed out to Lakshaman about the presence of Indr just above the ashram, and he advised him and Sita, “Stay back for a while, until I come back with correct information.”

Indr saw Ram coming, and he spoke to Sharbhanga, “I have to go now before Ram enters here. I can't see him now, and I would meet him when he finishes the tough task of eliminating Ravan.” Saying thus, Indr's chariot disappeared.

Ram, Lakshaman, and Sita arrived at the *ashram* and paying their respect on the holy feet of the sage took to their seat offered by Sharbhang. Ram enquired, “Indr was here and he left before I entered.” Sharbhang mentioned, “Due to my selfless penance he was here to take me to *brahmlok*, which I denied to go before I meet you. I offer all my achievements of heaven and *brahmlok* to you.”

Hearing this Ram spoke, “I would grant you eternal abode including the other higher domains<sup>1</sup>, but at the moment I am seeking guidance for a shelter to stay in forest (3-5-33).

Sharbhaga replied, “I would advise you to see Sutikshn sage staying nearby. He would make all arrangements for your stay in the forest. Take the route along the bank of the river Mandakini in opposite direction of the current of the stream. This will lead you to the *ashram* of Sutikshn. Before you go, let me quit this mundane and old body. ”

Sharbhang lit the sacrificial fire and pouring ritual oblations, he himself entered into the fire. When his physical remains were totally burnt, there came out a resplendent person over the flames, who offering due respect to Ram marched towards *brahmlok* crossing the abodes of sages, and gods. When he arrived in *brahmlok*, Brahma offered him due respect and proper reception.

### 3-6 Sages met Ram (26 / 178)

After the glorious departure of Sharbhang, other sages gathered for the glimpse of Ram. Several distinct groups of sages who met Ram were: (i) *vaikhanas* – born from the nails of Brahma, (ii) *valkhilya* – born from the hair of Brahma, (iii) *samprakshal* – those who keep their food pots cleaned after meal and don't possess for future use, (iv) *marichip* – those who sustain their life on the energy absorbed from sun and moon, (v) *asmkutt* – taking raw grains pounded with stone, (vi) *ptrahar* – those staying on leaves of plants, (vii) *dantolukhali* – those who use their teeth as pestle, (viii) *unmajjak* – those who carry out penance immersed in throat deep water, (ix) *gatrasya* – whose body is bed itself, (x) *asayya* – without access to bed, (xi) *anwakasik* – don't enjoy relaxing moment leaving good works, (xii) *salilahar* – sustaining life on water, (xiii) *vayubhaksh* –

<sup>1</sup> Through this assurance Ram indicated about His supreme divinity. The same *shlok* in verbatim is found 3-7-14 assuring Sutikshn.



sustaining life on air, (xiv) *akashnilay* – staying in open sky, (xv) *sthandilsayi* – sleeping on sacrifice squares, (xvi) *urdhvavashi* – staying on high places of mountains, (xvii) *dant* – controller of senses, (xviii) *ardrapatwasa* – always wear wet garment, (xix) *sajap* – constantly conducting *japa* (mental recitation), (xx) *taponishth* – constantly meditating, (xxi) *panchagni* – surrounded by heat in open sky during summer.

They together acquainted Ram with the state of helplessness in face of atrocities of demons. They mentioned, “Being the royal representative of this zone you are our protector. It is said when the king collects one sixth of the income from the citizens of the state, he is bound to provide due protection to the citizens. It is also said that one fourth of the auspicious output of the sages goes in favour of the king.”

They showed Ram the skeletal remains of the sages left by demons after devouring them alive. Moved by the prevailing plight of the sages, Ram assured them, “My forest exile appears to be of some use to the sages. I would definitely do all what is needed to protect you against the demons.

### 3-7 Ram visited Sutikshn ( 24 / 202)

Accompanied by host of Brahmins Ram traversed the deep forest crossing river flowing with water. On way, the trees were found bearing ample fruits and flowers. When he arrived at the *ashram* of Sutikshn, he saw him in meditative state squatted over lotus posture with erect spine. Ram addressed him, “I am Ram, I have come to pay you respect.” Sutikshn opened his eyes and embraced Ram closely. He paid great respect to him and mentioned, “I had learnt about your arrival in Chitrakoot. On your arrival the *ashram* has attained a respectful status. We are very fortunate. I was awaiting your arrival and had ignored the request of Indr to depart for *brahmlok*. All the attainments of my life long penance, I offer to you, Lakshaman and Sitā.”

Hearing his soft submission, Ram mentioned, “Sage Sarbhanga who is descendant of Guatum muni, had told all about your sacrifice for the benefit of the common people. I admire your penance and assure you that I can readily provide you all the benefits which you achieved from your life long sacrifices (3-7-14). Now I seek your guidance for my proper shelter place around in the forest.”

Sutikshn continued with his offer to Ram to stay at his ashram only, “All the wild animals gather here shedding their inherent animosity except a few deer who sometimes behave willfully. The trees and plants around here bear abundant fruits..”

Welcoming his gesture Ram spoke, “Sometimes against willful deer, if I have to use my arrow, that will go against the code of conduct of tolerance of the *ashram*, and therefore, we would prefer to stay outside at some other place.”

Saying thus he went to perform *sandhya gayatri* (the daily ritual at dusk time). On his completion of evening ritual, Sutikshn himself brought and respectfully offered to them delicious cereal for their meal.

**3-8 Ram departed for further forest ( 20 / 222)**

Getting respected by the sage, Ram spent the night, and in the morning all three of them took bath from water scented with lotus fragrance. They offered their proper worship to fire and requested the sage to permit them to depart from there to other part of Dandak enabling them to get familiarized with other sages. When Ram and Lakshaman touched the feet of the sage at the time of departure, he embraced them in affection and wished their auspicious forest journey. He also advised them to come back again. Sita helped them by holding their weapons while they were fixing them at appropriately position on their body. Twitching the bow string, two lion-men departed delightfully on further journey.

**3-9 Sita cautioned Ram (33 / 254)**

When they were on move, Sita softly submitted to Ram, “I like to caution your pledge against demons. Three acts are considered to degrade the person to a lower level: (i) speaking lie, (ii) lust for other’s wife, (iii) killing a being without animosity. However, in your case the first two don’t apply, but the last one has caused a concern to me. This is because you assured sages on their complaints against demons. I doubt, unless a demon directly harm you, will it be proper to attack or kill any demon ? In this respect I recall the story of a sage who was engaged in deep meditation. Indr afraid of his achievements visited his *ashram* and left his sword in his custody. Thereafter the sage concentrated on protecting the sword and got diverted from his main objective of meditation. Wherever he moved, he carried the sword. Always contemplating about the sword made him cruel and finally he fell to hell. In a similar way your association with bow and other weapons might make you cruel against those beings who don’t directly concern you. In forest we need to basically adhere to ascetics’ life style than that of a warring *kshatriya*.”

**3-10 Ram pledged firmness (22 / 276)**

Appreciating Sita’s concern Ram spoke to her, “I should have myself taken care of the sages against their plight in forest. But they approached and familiarized me.” Sages had also mentioned, “Although from the potential of penance we can hurl mortifying curse on the demons but afraid of erosion of auspiciousness gathered from the continued effort and under this fear of diversion from our meditation, we don’t want to do that.”

Ram continued, “Now I have assured them to extend my all cooperation to deal with the cruel demons. How can I deviate from this? I am bound to observe the truth, and once committed I need to maintain that. In fact demons are at fault, because to satisfy their hunger from human flesh, they kill the innocent sages, and for a *kshatriya* mutely witnessing the happening of unfair act is a sin.”

### 3-11 Wandering Ram visited Agastya (94 / 370)

While moving around, he was accompanied by some of the sages. At one place he found a pond having crystal water, and fragrant lotus spread all over had made it very attractive. There was no trace of any settlement near the pond but musical notes coming out of it and that attracted Ram's attention. He enquired from Dharmabhrt, one of accompanying sages and the sage informed him, "Long back the sage Mandkarni undertook a severe penance. Gods got sacred for they apprehended that some of them might lose their position to sage Mandkarni. They sent five charming celestial dancers to intervene successful completion of his penance. Those dancers got success and the sage fell a prey to their beauty and lust. They got married to the sage and they continued staying with the sage forever. Because of his penance, the sage always looks young and those dancers stay in his service inside a mansion built hidden below this pond. The musical sound is combination of several instruments, the movement of the anklets of the dancers, and their vocal presentations as well. This pond is popularly called *Panchapsr*."

Having moved further in the forest, Ram stayed in one of the hermitages on way. Thus he spent about ten years in that zone staying with sages. He kept wandering from one place to another. At some of the *ashram* he stayed three months, at another his stay was even longer. At some *ashram* he stayed for ten months also. In this process, at some of them he stayed for second time also.

Moving around in this way he came back again to *ashram* of Sutikshn *muni*. While staying there, he expressed his desire to visit the *ashram* of Agstya *muni*. Sutikshn appreciated his enquiry and explained the route to Agastya's *ashram*, "Exactly four *yojan* south of this *ashram* there is one *ashram* that belongs to brother of Agstya *muni*. That *ashram* is surrounded by dense *pippilika* groves near a charming large pond. The *ashram* of Agstya *muni* is one *yojan* from there."

Next morning Ram left for his destination of Agastya *muni*. Ram occupied the lead position, keeping Sita in the middle, Lakshaman followed as the rear guard. Having covered the indicated route, Ram could view from a distance *ashram* of the brother of Agastya.

He spoke to Lakshaman, "As explained by sage Sutikshn, we now appear to reach *ashram* of that sage who is brother of great Agastya *muni*. It is well known fact that Agstya *muni* lives for the welfare of the all the beings. There were two demons called Ilval and Vatapi. Ilval used to visit sages in the guise of a Brahmin. His brother Vatapi was capable of taking the guise of a vegetable plant. Ilval used to cook that vegetable plant as one of the items of meal for the sages. When all sages had taken their meal, Ilval would call out his brother by name, Vatapi. To attend his call, Vatapi would come out tearing the abdomen of all the sages who had taken the meal cooked by Ilval. In this way hundreds of sages were being killed by nefarious design of these two demons whom they used to devour. Once they played the same trick where Agastya was also invited. By the potential of Agastya, despite repeated call out by Ilval, Vatapi never came

out and he was dead forever. Ilval attacked over Agastya in retaliation, but his sharp sight burnt the demon to ashes.”

Thus describing the glory of Agastya it was dusk time and they reached *ashram* of his brother. They offered their respect to the sage who welcome them with respect at his *ashram*. They performed their evening ritual and stayed there for night. Next morning, seeking the permission of the sage they left for *ashram* of Agastya *muni*. On way, Ram again revealed about the significance of the name Agastya, “One who stops the growth of mountain is called Agastya. In fact, once Vindhya mountain began rising up to hinder the sun’s route. On the initiative of Agastya, Vindhya stopped, and didn’t move further upwards. It is said gods come at his *ashram* for success in penance and meditation. I would also spend the balance days of forest life serving the sage at his *ashram*.”

When they arrived at ashram, Ram advised Lakshaman, “Go inside, and inform that Ram and Sita have arrived.”

### 3-12 Ram received divine weapons (37 / 407)

Entering inside the hermitage, Lakshaman spoke to one of the insiders disciples of the sage, “The elder son of Dasarath, Ram with his wife Sita have arrived here to pay their respect to the sage Agastya. I am his brother Lakshaman.” The disciple instantly went to the fire square where Agastya was engaged in offering oblation. On hearing the arrival of Ram with Sita and Lakshaman, Agastya spoke, “I was long waiting for his arrival, why didn’t you get him in.” The disciple rushed and welcome them inside, and in the meanwhile the sage also came out of the fire square. Leading a group of ascetics, Agastya moved towards Ram, while Ram pointed out to Lakshaman, “See, the most brilliant personality is the sage Agastya, who is moving towards us.”

Ram paid his respect to the sage by holding both of his holy feet. Sita and Lakshaman also touched the feet of the sage. The sage respected them by offering ritual water (*arghya*, *padya*, *achamaniyam*) followed by seats to them. He offered oblation in fire in respect of his special guests, and then offered food to them. Greeting them, the sage spoke, “You being all in all of all the *lokas*<sup>2</sup> (3-12-30), observe righteousness. I am delighted to respect you as my dear and respectful guest.” Saying thus he offered varieties of fruits, roots and flowers in their honour.

Agastya offered divine weapons to Ram which was lying in his possession, “The bow of Vishnu made by *viswakarma*, one brilliant divine shaft obtained from Brahma, two quivers of Indr always remaining full of arrows, and one sword having golden handle with golden sheath.”

<sup>2</sup> Agastya expresses the supreme divinity of Ram (and not only an ideal human being as commonly propagated by some of the commentators of Valmiki Ramayan).

### 3-13 Agastya sent Ram to Panchvati (25 / 432)

The sage was highly delighted with the special guest. He time and again appreciated their efforts for coming to his ashram and mentioned, "You must be tired of the forest journey. Sita, particularly has taken great pains in staying with you in forest. Normally women desert the husband in his period of calamity. All praise to her for adhering to your association ! Through my meditation, I have come to know all the developments and your arrival in the forest."

Ram respectfully submitted, "I am fortunate that our performances have impressed you and we have received immense affection from you. I seek your guidance for finding a place where we can stay"

Agastay maintained silence for some time and then replied, "Two yojan south of this place there is a place called panchavati endowed with all natural facilities of flowers, fruits, roots and rive Godavari. I advise you to stay there which will keep Sita also happy."

Pointing out the route the sage mentioned, "Take north of this mahua grove, and thereafter there is a huge banyan tree. Going further there is a high and plain land. From there the mountain is seen, and the area around there is *panchavati*."

They offered respect to the sage Agastya, and left for *panchavati*.

### 3-14 Jatayu (36 / 468)

While moving towards panchavati they spotted a huge bodied eagle and considering that as a demon, Ram asked, "Who are you?" The eagle speaking very mildly but gladly, advised Ram to consider him as a friend of his father. Hearing that Ram offered respect to him and became curious for his identity.

The eagle began his introduction with the commencement of the creation, "The first forefather (*prajapati*) was Kardam, and down the rung were: 2<sup>nd</sup> - Vikrut, 3<sup>rd</sup> – Shesh, 4<sup>th</sup> – Sanshray, 5<sup>th</sup> – Bahuputra, 6<sup>th</sup> – Sthanu, 7<sup>th</sup> – Marichi, 8<sup>th</sup> – Atri, 9<sup>th</sup> – Kratu, 10<sup>th</sup> – Pulastya, 11<sup>th</sup> – Angira, 12<sup>th</sup> – Pracheta (Varun), 13<sup>th</sup> – Pulah, 14<sup>th</sup> – Daksh, 15<sup>th</sup> and the last – Kashyap.

Daksh was blessed with 60 daughters and 8 among them married to Kashyap were: Aditi, Diti, Danu, Kalaka, Tamra, Krodhvasha, Manu and Anala. Kashayap urged his wives to produce able persons committed to welfare of the creation. Only four of them, Aditi, Diti, Danu and Kalaka paid heed to his words.

*Aditi* produced 33 gods: 12 *aditya*, 8 *vasu*, 11 *rudra*, and 2 *aswini kumar*.

*Diti* produced mighty sons called *daitya* (demons) who had complete control over the domain of forest, seas and the earth.

*Danu* gave birth to Aswgriva, and Kalaka produced two sons Narak and Kalak.

Tamra gave birth to five daughters who became producers of birds: *Kronchi*, *Bhashi*, *Shyeni*, *Dhritrashtri*, and *Shuki*. The birth of birds took place: owls are from *Kronchi*; *Bhash* from *Bhashi*; *Shyen* and eagles from *Shyeni*; swans (*hans* and *kalhans*), *chakrvak* from *Dhritrashtri*. The youngest daughter of Tamra was *Shuki* who produced a daughter *Nata*, and from *Nata* was born her daughter *Vinata*.

*Krodhvasa* established the species of animals by producing ten daughters: *mrighi*, *mrigamanda*, *hari*, *bhadramada*, *matangi*, *sharduli*, *shweta*, *surabhi*, *sursa* and *kadru*.

- *mrighi* caused the birth of all sorts of deer, and *mrigamanda* produced bear.
- *bhadramada* caused the birth of a daughter *airavati*, who produced mighty son *airavat*, the chief among elephants.
- *hari* produced lions, and monkeys.
- *sharduli* caused the birth of tigers.
- *matangi* and *shweta* produced elephants of the respective species *matnag* and *shwet*.
- *surabhi* gave birth to two daughters *rohini* and *gandharvi*. *Rohini* produced cows and *gandharvi* produced horses.
- *sursa* produced *nag* (serpents), and *kadru* caused the species of snakes (*pannag*).

*Manu* gave birth to human beings: Brahmins (from mouth), kshatriya (from chest), vaishya (from thighs), and shudra (from feet).

*Anala* caused the creation of all varieties of trees.

*Vinata*, the granddaughter of *Shuki* (the daughter of *Tamra*) had two sons: *arun* and *garud*.

The eagle concluded his description, "I am born of *arun* from my mother *shyeni*. We are two brothers, me as *Jatayu*, and *Shampati*."

*Jatau* offered all help in establishing the shelter in *panchavati*, and at the same time assured protection to *Sita* when she would be alone in case two brothers go out in forest.

*Ram* offered father like respect to *Jatayu*, who in turn embraced them affectionately. *Ram* then listened to the story how he had become friend of his father.

### 3-15 Raising of *Panchavati ashram* (31 / 499)

Taking leave of *Jatayu* they moved around the area which was indicated by the sage *Agastya*. The area had abundance of trees bearing fruits and flowers. River *Godavari*

was in close vicinity. There were other ponds with colourful lotuses floating over water surface. When Ram asked Lakshaman to select a place to raise *ashram*, pleasing to Sita, and convenient for access to water, Lakshaman submitted, “For infinity I had been dependent upon you, pray you to select the proper spot. ”

Ram gave a round and found a place which had the surrounding natural scene of varieties of fruit bearing trees, lakes, several kinds of birds inhabiting on lake side, mountains reflecting the copper and silver hue looking like overlooking windows high in the sky reverberating the mild voice of dancing peacocks.

On the selected site, Lakshaman built a beautiful *ashram*, using clay walls, wooden pillars, and inclined thatched roof having *kush*, *shami* etc. in different layers. On completion of the construction of *ashram*, Ram had a look and greatly appreciating Lakshaman’s effort; he embraced him close to his chest.

Lakshaman taking bath in Godavari, brought flowers and fruits and carried out religious ritual for invoking auspiciousness in the newly built *ashram*. Thereafter they settled in the *ashram*.

### 3-16 Staying at *panchavati* (43 / 532)

Autumn (*sharad* शरद) months (*ashwin* आश्विन and *kartik* कार्तिक) passed, and winter (*hemant* हेमन्त) months of *margshirsh* मार्गशीर्ष and *paush* पौष arrived. One day early morning, before sunrise, while going to Godavari for bath, Lakshaman followed Ram and Sita with a water pitcher in his hands.

Lakshaman spoke to Ram, “During *hemant* हेमन्त the influence of cold weather over the surrounding environment is perceptible. The paddy is ripe and the stems have bent down with the weight of sheaf of corn. Wheat and barley plants have sprouted adding lush green vision to the fields. New cereals are being offered to the gods. The dew points shine over the plants. The water is so cool that even thirsty elephants are seen sipping time and again with bent trunks. The air is cold because of westerly cold wind. The hill tops have shining condensed dew points. The winter night is hazy and moon has lost its attractive vision. The rising sun looks like the moon, and it becomes warm and lovely from the noon time. The water surface of the river is covered with dense fog and its visibility is guessed by the presence of chirping *saras* birds, and also from the edge of dew-covered sand bed.”

Lakshaman grew nostalgic and mentioned about Bharat, “How pious he is ! He must have been staying like an ascetics. The one who enjoyed the royal pleasure must have been moving in the winter morning to Saryu for bath. It is said one’s inherent nature is more influenced by mother than father, but in case of Bharat this doesn’t apply. I wonder, despite association of king like Dasarath, and son like Bharat, how could Kaikeyi become so cruel?”

Ram intervened and forbade Lakshaman denouncing Kakeyi. He advised him to keep elaborating more on Bharat. While saying so he also craved for early union of the brothers at Ayodhya.

Before sun rise they took bath in Godavari, and offered respect to sun when it rose above the horizon. They also offered glory to gods.

### 3-17 Surpanakha at *panchavati* (29 / 561)

Coming back from the river, Ram completed the forenoon oblation to fire. Subsequently, they together enjoyed the sitting in the open hut. Thus staying at *panchavati*, he used to host the greetings to several visiting sages to his ashram.

Once he was in the company of Sita as if moon was enjoying the conjunction with *chitra* (3-17-4). Surpanakha a demoness arrived there and could see the grand personality of Ram in company of Sita and Lakshaman. Getting impressed by his charming rare personality, compared to her ugly physique made of large abdomen, red hair, split roaring voice she appeared in the guise of a beautiful woman and coming closer to Ram spoke, "With a lady in your company, who are you in the garb of an ascetic? How did you arrive here in the land of demons? What is your aim?"

Mildly Ram spoke to her, "I am elder son of the great king Dasarath. She is Sita, my wife, and he is my brother Lakshaman. By command of our father Dasarath, and mother Kaikeyi, we here in the forest. Who are you? It seems, being a demon, you have assumed a disguised form of a beautiful woman."

Surpanakha disclosed her identity, "My name is Surpanakha. I keep roaming on my will over all places. I am sister of Ravan, son of the sage Vishrava, I presume you must have heard about him. Kumbhakarn, the mighty demon famous for his slumber is my brother. Vibhishan, my another brother is more righteous and has opposite nature than that of a demon. Khar and Dushan are also my brothers. I have great potential. Seeing you, I am impressed, and I propose to marry you which will keep you happy, and you will be able to enjoy the pleasure of the mountains and groves of Dandak forest with me. I will eat this woman who is ugly and skinny. I will also finish that man. We would have free and pleasant company."

Hearing her proposal Ram laughed loudly.

### 3-18 Surpanakha penalized (26 / 587)

Ram spoke to her, "I am already married and you will never be happy as a co-wife. My brother Lakshaman is alone here. You may appeal him to accept you as a wife." She went to Lakshaman and expressed her desire to marry him. Lakshaman turning down her proposal said, "Look, O, charming lady! I am an attendant of my elder brother. Becoming my wife, why do you desire to become a maid? Go and appeal to Ram to accept you as his second wife and you will enjoy the elevated status."



Taking his advice sincerely, she again came back to Ram and spoke, "Ignore this human being and marry me who is capable of all performances. You will enjoy your life. Since she is the obstacle on my, I would now finish her off." Saying thus she rushed towards Sita, but Ram with his daunting nasal sound deterred her at a distance. Addressing Lakshaman Ram spoke, "Never use humour with demons. She was about to finish Sita. Penalize her immediately by cutting some vital organ."

Enraged Lakshaman drew his sword and cut off her nose and ears. Bleeding profusely, she ran away, and went to Khar, his brother.

### **3-19 Surpanakha complained to Khar (26 / 613)**

She fell flat before his brother Khar. Seeing her plight of blood soaked body and defiled ears and nose, he became very angry. Defying the potential of the culprit who misbehaved with her, he asked as to how did she attain that condition. She narrated the details, "Two rarely handsome young ascetics equipped with bow and arrows are here in Dandaka. They are accompanied by an equally charming woman. They have caused my mutilation. I desire to drink the blood of that woman along with the blood of those two beings."

Khara instantly commanded his mightiest contingent of fourteen demons, "Two human beings have entered with a woman in Dandak. Go and come back with their dead bodies, my sister wants to enjoy the drink of their blood."

Accompanied by Surpanakha, they arrived at *panchvati*, as if a gale has stormed the site with dark cloud.

### **3-20 Ram killed fourteen demons (25 / 638)**

Arriving at *panchavati* those demons saw Ram and Sita sitting in a hut being attended by Lakshaman. Ram also saw them, and asked Lakshaman to take care of Sita for the time being, until he killed those demons.

He moved forward with a bow in his hands, and addressed those demons, "You had been cruelly killing sages and Brahmins here. Why do you want to kill me? Due to your barbarity I have vowed to protect the sages."

Those demons collectively attacked over him by hurling their deadly spears and tridents. Ram cut them away and then charged fourteen shafts at a time, which killed them by piercing through their chest.

Scared Surpanakha quit the site instantly.

### **3-21 Surpanakha apprised Khar (22 / 660)**

Coming back to Khar she lied down tossing like a snake on ground. Khar told to her, "We have sent the contingent and now there is no reason for your lamentation." Disclosing the death of those fourteen deadly demons she exhorted Khar, "Don't sit idle."

I want the blood of those human beings. They have challenged the demons in their home place Dandak. How would you allow them to move alive? If you don't have courage then quit Janasthan."

### **3-22 Khar departed to *panchavati* (24 / 684)**

On being prompted by Surpanakha, Khar commanded the army chief, Dushan to get his chariot ready and move fourteen thousand strong army to *panchavati*. Soon his huge chariot lead by piebald horses was brought to him. It was equipped with all sorts of weapons. The demons contingent having varieties of swords, tridents, spear and other remote attack tools left Janasthan. Khar was leading the contingent.

### **3-23 Bad omens to Khar (34 / 718)**

Soon there were noticeable occurrences of bad omens. The color of sky changed to ass color and it rained mixed with blood. The horses of chariot carrying Khar fell down flat on ground. A large vulture perched over the flag of his chariot. Several inauspicious animals and birds were seen openly making terrible sound. The sun was encircled by a black ring and red border. Khar had witnessed personal bad omens as well for his left arm twitched frequently. His head ached severely. He noticed these omens but ignoring them encouraged his contingent, "Even death can't face us today. Ram and Lakshaman have balance span of life until we reach Dandak."

Sages and gods appeared on the sky to witness the holocaust. They prayed for all auspiciousness to Ram.

### **3-24 Ram in readiness (36 / 754)**

Ram observed the natural bad omens outside; wild animals, and birds were uncomfortable and leaving the forest for safe area getting scared from the noise of the coming of demons' army. He advised Lakshaman, "Please don't argue, be ready with your weapons and take Sita to a safe cave in the opposite mountain. I would take care of the demons. Don't worry, I am confident of my capability to deal them." Lakshaman complied his command, and Ram fixed the necessary quivers, and weapons to his easy access. Gods and celestial bodies gathered in open sky to watch the valiance of Ram. Sometimes they expressed their doubt over his ability in lone combating the huge demons' army.

### **3-25 Ram in encounter (47 / 801)**

Coming near his ashram, Khar saw Ram standing alone with bow and arrows. He drove close to him and was surrounded by trusted valiant demons. Addressing Ram to face him, he charged thousands of arrows which caused some bruises over his body. The demons also attacked simultaneously over Ram. Initially he was surrounded by demons and sustained several minor injuries. He kept on cutting off their weapons, and he drew the string such that the bow became circular in shape and he charged innumerable shafts over the demons. His unfailing shafts (*naleek*, *narach*, and *vikarni*) created huge

casualties of the demons. Scared they had begun fleeing. In order to encourage the fleeing demons, Dushan with bow in his hands rushed to Ram.

### **3-26 Dushan eliminated (38 / 839)**

Dushan used his tough arrows and the strong five thousand demons army coming in the front continued showering all sorts of weapons over Ram. Ram confidently kept warding off their attack and at the same causing sever casualties among them. He charged a shaft (*kshur*) to destroy the bow in the hand of Dushan. With some more shafts he killed horses, the charioteer, and forced him to walk on the ground. Taking a deadly axe, Dushan attacked over Ram like an angry snake. Ram cut down both his arms causing the axe to fall on the ground. Following the arms, the body of Dushan also collapsed on the ground and he was dead.

Three army commanders, Mahakapal, Sthulaksh, and Pramathi made a concerted attack over Ram. They moved on foot using their axe, spear and swords. Ram in a moment, using his sharp arrows cut off the head of Mahakapal, plugged the eyes of Sthulaksh, and churned Pramathi into pieces. He also killed five thousand strong army of Dushan in next moments.

Khar saw the loss of Dushan, and he attacked with his balance commanders and contingents over Ram. His twelve army commanders: Shyengami, Prithugriv, Ygyashatru, Vihamgam, Durjay, Karveeraksh, Parush, Kalkarmuk, Hemamali, Mahamali, Sarpasya, and Rudhirashan were collectively fighting Ram. Soon Ram killed them, and using *karni* arrow he killed hundreds and thousands of demons. The entire earth was covered with dead bodies as if *kush* had spread over the ground. Only Khar and Trishira survived and all others were lying dead over the ground.

### **3-27 Trishira killed ( 20 / 859)**

Khar mounted on his chariot approached Ram in great anger. At the same time, Trishira also drove his chariot close to Khar and requested him, "Allow me to fight him out. If I kill him, you would go to Janasthan happily, but if I am killed then you would fight him. This is my chance and nor for you."

Trishira driving his chariot near to Ram charged several arrows some of them hit the forehead of Ram. Enraged Ram, made his without chariot by killing the horses, and the charioteer. While Trishira was jumping down the chariot, he charged heavily over his chest and using separate quick shafts cut down his three heads rolling down over the ground.

Seeing Trishira killed, some surviving demons accompanying Khar took to their heels. Khar encouraging them got back to Ram.

**3-28 Khar in combat ( 33 / 892)**

Khar reflecting for a while over the loss of Dushan, Trishira and the entire accompanying army became sad. However, he drove towards Ram and demonstrated his archery by covering the adjoining horizon with arrows. Ram also used his arrows to cover the balance part of sky with arrows. Coming close to Ram, Khar used sharpest of arrows nalik, narach, and vikarni and injured Ram very quickly. He used his sharp shaft to cut down the bow of Ram into two pieces and continued showering arrows over him causing physical injury to his body.

Ram picked up another strong bow which he had got in gift from the sage Agastya. He used thirteen arrows to cut down his bow, the flag of chariot, killed four horses and charioteer, damaging the wheels and axles completely. Khar, picking up a mace in his hand jumped down and rushed towards Ram.

**3-29 Khar made weaponless (28 / 920)**

When Khar came close to him with mace in his hand, Ram reminded of his misdeeds, "You have killed several innocent sages, and now today you will follow them in the other world. On the line of your army, you also shall reach your end soon. Under the command of my father, I am here in forest to deal with devils like you."

Khar ridiculed his statement, "Ram, your self-praise is a foolish act. Don't be over egoistic. Killing weak demons, you are mistaken of being a warrior." Saying thus he hurled his mighty mace over Ram, which he instantly cut into pieces by his tough arrows.

**3-30 Khar killed (41 / 961)**

Ram again reminded him standing weaponless, "You have lost not only all your companions but your weapons also. Soon you would follow your fellow demons after your death." Laughing at Ram, Khar spoke, "Only talks won't help you. See how you get your end now." He picked up a *sal* tree and hurled over Ram with great force. Ram instantly cut that down, and hurled several shafts substantially damaging his body. He, finally charged, the shaft of Indr which killed Khar like the fire burns the dry leaf.

Sages and gods showered flowers over Ram sighing a great relief against the demons atrocities. Janasthan was almost freed from demons. Agastya appeared and appreciated Ram for his miraculous deeds. He reminded Ram, "For this day, Indr didn't see you at Sharbhanga's place. We all expected you to carry out the valiant task of eliminating the demons from Janasthan.

Lakshaman soon came back with Sita to offer his respect to Ram. Sita was glad to see Ram after such a great performance and offered him deep and affectionate respect.

**3-31 Akampan alarmed Ravan (50 / 1011)**

Akampan rushing to Lanka reported to Ravan about the loss of demons in Janasthan. Agitated Ravan spoke, "Whose end is imminent? How can demons be killed in

Janasthan. My wrath can't be combated by Indr, Kuber, Yam and Vishnu. I am capable of burning the fire, and sun alike." When he was a little cooler, Akampan sought his permission to elaborate on the developments, "Ram is son of Dasarath. He is accompanied by his wife Sita and brother Lakshaman. They are live manifestation of charm and beauty."

Ravan wanted to know whether Ram had arrived in Janasthan with Indr and other gods. Akampan continued, "Ram is expert in warfare and archery. No archer on earth can match his skill. He alone killed Khar, Dushan and other thousands of demons. None of the sage or gods had helped him.

Anxious Ravan spoke, "I shall now move to Janasthan and kill those two brothers." Akampan opposed his idea and forewarned him against the eventuality. He proposed, "There is only one way to kill Ram. His wife Sita is the beauty queen of the universe. If you steal her away, I am sure he would sacrifice his life."

Ravan appreciated his advice and soon mounting the chariot carried by asses he drove to Marich (the son of Tataka) in forest. Offering respect to Ravan, Marich spoke, "Greeting you here, I wonder whether everything is fine with you. I notice mark of concern over your face." Ravan replied, "I am greatly concerned of the killing of Khar, Dushan and other demons in Janasthan. Ram alone killed all the demons. I seek your help in stealing away his wife Sita."

Marich rejecting his proposal advised him to withdraw this idea, "Someone must be not only your enemy but enemy of the demons' race who advised you to carry out this act of stealing Sita. You will lose all your dignity and auspiciousness. Soon you will reach to the brink of total annihilation. Ram is a lion whose limbs represent various elements of rare valour. He is himself the manifestation of unparallel skill in warfare. He is second to none in archery and battle field. You enjoy with your wives the royal Lanka, and let him enjoy his life with his wife Sita in forest."

Ravan appeared to have been reasoned by his advice, quietly came back to Lanka.

### **3-32 Surpanakha rushed to Ravan (25 / 1036)**

Scared by the elimination of the demons including valiant warriors Khar, Dushan and Trishira, Surpanakha rushed to Ravan. When she entered Lanka, Ravan was found surrounded by his ministers on the highest floor of the *pushpak viman*. He was occupying the golden throne and appeared like a glowing flame of fire. He was known for his valour and victory. The dent of tusk of airavat was yet visible on his chest. His body still carried the marks of *vajra* and *asni* while he fought gods. Once he entered Kailas and snatched the best of air plane called *pushpak viman* from Kuber. Several times he had damaged Kuber's *chaitrarath* grove, and *Nalini* lake famous for *saugandhik* lotus, Indr's *nandan van*, and other celestial groves. He was capable of stopping sun and moon from rising. For ten thousand years he carried out penance and on offering his ten heads he pleased Brahma. He was immune against any harm from any of the creatures

in the world except human beings. He was cruel and had stopped sages from performing any sacred *ygya*. Surpanakha saw Ravan, famous for making others weep, and getting closer to him narrated her plight.

### **3-33 Surpanakha criticized Ravan (24 / 1060)**

She criticized her way of governance, “You act like a simple boy unaware of what is happening around. If you spend your time in enjoying the royal comfort, soon the days will come when you will lose your kingdom. The king who fails in gathering the information from spies has a doomed future. The used flowers and cloths are worthless, similarly a careless king loses the grace. If you don’t maintain your formidable personality, you are destined to be ignored by citizens. Janasthan has been made devoid of demons by Ram and you are not concerned about that.”

Hearing her harsh words, Ravan grew more concerned.

### **3-34 Surpanakha provoked Ravan (26 / 1086)**

Angry Ravan asked her, “Who is this Ram, and why did he come in Dandak ? Can tell me about him in detail? How did you lose your nose and ears?”

Surpanakha mentioned, “Ram is a son of king Dasarath. He physique is charming with long arms, and lotus like eyes. His look is more impressive than cupid. He wears deer skin and bark. Being on foot, he killed fourteen thousand demons, Khar and Dushan, mounted on chariots. I couldn’t see how swiftly he pulled the arrows, loaded the bow and charged them. I could only see demons falling like cut down trees over ground. He has a brother accompanying him equally handsome, valiant and subservient to him. His wife accompanying him has no other match in this creation. She is like second goddess *Lakshami*. Her name is Sita and she is daughter of Janak. I tried to kidnap her for you, but Lakshaman insulted me by cutting my nose and ears and since I am a woman I have been spared alive, otherwise I would have been killed like other demons. O, Ravan, get up and grab that woman Sita, you will have rare comfort in her association.”

### **3-35 Ravan reached Marich again (42 / 1128)**

With anxiety, Ravan consulted the ministers, and silently entered the parking place of chariots. He picked up a comfortable and automatic moving chariot carried by asses. The chariot moved out and he received all royal treatment inside the chariot, i.e., white umbrella over his head, and fanning by white *chavar*. He kept roaming around the coastal area and enjoyed varieties of scenes: springs from mountain top, sandal grove with scented breeze around, silver and gold mountain tops, forests rich in fruits and fragrant flowers bearing trees, towns with elephants, horses and chariots. He passed over a huge banyan tree having branches spread over one hundred *yojan*, under which several ascetics were engaged in their life cherished penance. Once Garuda, carrying his food items, one elephant and a tortoise, arrived with speed and perched over one of its branches. With his weight, the branch broke, but Garuda very swiftly held the branch and prey in his possession and flew in the sky. This saved the lives of several sages

who were engaged in deep meditation under the tree. He finished his food eating elephant and tortoise while flying, and threw the branch over the land of Nishad which caused several casualties. That banyan tree is called *Subhadra vat*. Getting doubly satisfied with his success, Garuda entered into heaven and took out the pitcher of ambrosia locked in a safe place. Ravan took a look at the famous banyan tree, and moved to the opposite shore of the sea. Here he entered the hermitage, where Marich was engaged in penance in an ascetic's garb. Marich warmly greeted Ravan by offering several varieties of food and drink. He enquired the purpose of his second visit in quick succession.

### 3-36 Ravan revealed his plan (24 / 1152)

Ravan spoke, "Marich, you are aware Janasthan had dominance of demons. Khar, Dushan, Trishira and fourteen thousand demons had controlled this place where sages were not free to conduct their *ygya*. Ram killed all of them. He has been banished by his father to forest and is staying here with his wife and brother. He is cruel, and violator of righteousness. Without any fault, my sister Surpanakha has been humiliated and he cut her nose and ears. I plan to steal away his wife, and in her absence he won't be able to survive. My plan is that you move in front of their ashram in the guise of charming golden deer having silver pie bald spots. Attracted by the golden deer Sita would direct them to catch. When they would follow you, I finding her alone at ashram would easily take her away. I know you are only capable of doing this, and being a demons' pride help me to realize this plan."

Hearing his words, Marich became afraid, scared and sad.

### 3-37 Marich talked about Ram ( 25 / 1177)

With pale face looking towards Ravan, Marich spoke, "I am surprised about your feedback about Ram. What you told is incorrect. He is a portrait of righteousness and kindness to all beings. He has not been banished by his father. Queen Kaikeyi had deceptively taken words from the king to banish Ram. When Ram learnt it he himself left for forest and he had proved his father true to his assurances and words to queen Kaikeyi. Ram is a burning fire where his arrows make the flame, and bow and sword are the fuel. Sita is a chaste Woman who always follows Ram. If you want to invite calamity upon you and the entire demons' race of the earth, then only take the steps forward to steal her. Has she come to end your life? You won't be able to face Ram in a combat. Being adherent of Dharma, he has saintly kindness, and is supreme<sup>3</sup> राजा सर्वस्य लोकस्य (3-37-13) in all the worlds. You must assess correctly his strength, and then reflecting upon your plan in correct perspective , do what you find proper."

<sup>3</sup> *Marich*, by this expression proves the universal divine supremeness of Ram (and not only an ideal human being, contrary to common notion of some of the commentators about *Valmiki Ramayan* ).

### 3-38 Marich recalled his experience (33 / 1210)

Recalling his previous experience with Ram, Marich narrated the story, “I in a mountainous form, pitch black in colour, wearing shining golden earrings used to roam around freely in Dandakarnya. I was fearless because of boon of immortality from gods. Vishwamitr, scared of my disturbance in his *ygya*, went to Dasarath and sought the hands of Ram. Dasarath expressed his inability in sparing Ram who was below twelve<sup>4</sup> (3-38-6) and not familiarized with the warfare skills and volunteered himself with his army to protect the sage’s *ygya*. Viswamitr didn’t agree and he insisted that only Ram was acceptable to him. Ram (and Lakshaman) accompanied the sage and were on guard of his *ygya*. I arrived at the venue of *ygya* and had a look of Ram guarding the venue with a bow. He was resplendent with his divine brilliance and charming personality. Having seen me, he strung his bow, but ignoring him I rushed to the fire square for I was confident of boon of my immortality granted by gods. Immediately I received a severe shot of shaft throwing me one hundred *yojan* away deep into sea water where I regained my consciousness after a long time. It seems he spared my life, as all other demons accompanying me were killed. I therefore forbid you in taking any hasty step against him. The pleasure and peace of Lanka would be ruined. The demons enjoying their life would be eliminated and you with all your kith and kin would be guest of the death world.”

### 3-39 Marich recalled another incident (25 / 1235)

Marich continued with Ravan, “I recall another incident when Ram came as an ascetic to Dandak forest. Along with two other demons, I disguised as deer tried to retaliate my previous humiliation. We had sharp horns and rushed towards Ram to kill him. Sensing our malafide motive Ram charged three shafts to us. I could realize the potency of the shaft from my previous experience, and turning around ran away, whereas the other two were killed on the spot. I got a second grant of life. Thereafter I am so scared of him that all around in Dandak I see him on all trees, leaves and entities. I discarded my demonic attitude and now I resort to regular meditation.”

He further cautioned him, “If you take advantage of my experience drop your fatal plan and relax in Lanka. If you don’t give attention to my words, I won’t be any help to you and I would take that demons’ are doomed to be destroyed soon.”

### 3-40 Ravan threatened Marich (27 / 1262)

Ravan reacted sharply over the advice given by Marich, “I had asked you only to help me in realizing my plan. I didn’t ask your opinion on this. You know, before a king, one should do only what the king asks. You have transgressed your limits. A king is a living

<sup>4</sup> *Shlok* 3-38-6 may be compared with *shlok* 1-20-2 (i.e., of *Balkand sarg*-20, *shlok*-2) where Dasarath had mentioned Ram’s age below 16, where as in *Aranya sarg* -38, *sholk*-6, Marich mentioned it below 12. This could happen because of colloquial reference by Dasarath. His correct age is better revealed in *sarg* 3-47 hereafter which matches well with that indicated by Marich.



representative of five gods (*agni, indr, som, yam* and *varun*), and one must respect the king as if he is offering respect to those gods.”

Ravan further repeated his plan, “Taka a form of a golden deer with silver spots. Roam around in the sight of Sita. Impressed by golden deer, she will ask Ram to catch. When Ram follows you, take him away and cry in his voice, Hey! Sita, Hey ! Lakshaman. Misguided by your cry Sita will force Lakshaman behind Ram. When both of them would be absent from ashram, I would abduct Sita conveniently. Later, deceiving Ram you disappear and come back to your staying place. For this assistance, I would share half my kingdom with you.”

Ravan also threatened Marich, “If you disagree to oblige me, I would instantly kill you. Now you have to decide, whether you want to lose your life now or want to remain alive for a longer period even after implementation of my plan successfully.”

### **3-41 Marich pleaded in vain (20 / 1282)**

Hearing heard Ravan’s resolve, Marich became a little harsh, “I don’t know who wants to ruin you. Your minister advising you like this must be taking revenge against you. By this act, no demon including you, would survive. The city of Lanka is now on the brink of disaster. If I don’t accept your proposal, you are determined to kill me. It is better for me to be killed by Ram, than getting killed by you. I am sure, soon you would also be finished.”

### **3-42 Marich disguised as golden deer ( 35 / 1317)**

Expressing his impression, Marich accepted his proposal and asked him to move to Dandak. Ravan embracing him closely took him to his chariot being pulled by demonic asses. Soon they crossed various regions arrived at the *ashram* of Ram which was surrounded by plants of plantains. Marich transforming himself in a golden deer began grazing at the entry of the *ashram*.

It roamed around for some time in near and a little away from *ashram*. Other deer group also arrived there, and after smelling golden deer’s body they left the place. Marich was habitual of killing deer for his food, but this time he spared the life of wild deer, and concentrated on his assignment to attract Sita’s attention.

In the meanwhile Sita came out to pluck flowers. She had a view of the golden deer, and was engrossed in watching its beauty. She had never seen earlier such a charming deer.

### **3-43 Sita demanded the deer (51 / 1368)**

Sita looked at the deer time and again and called out Lakshaman to come out with his brother. Hearing Sita’s sound, they came out and had a look of the deer. Lakshaman immediately had a doubt and said, “This is some deception. This could be Marich, who is

famous for disguise of deer and killing several kings and sages in the past. I don't take this one as a real one."

Sita continued with her impression, "Our ashram is visited by varieties of animals including group of deer, but never such a charming deer had been spotted. I would like to have this deer. If it is caught alive, we would enjoy its company here in the forest, and later in Ayodhya it will be an object of visual delight for our mothers, and brothers. If it is not caught alive, its skin would be equally useful." She urged upon Ram to get hold of the deer.

Ram spoke to Lakshaman, "This deer is definitely attractive and of rare species. Let me try this. If it is deceptive demon Marich, I would kill by one shaft. The kings had been in the habit of hunting deer in forest. In the pretext of hunting for deer lot of precious metal (gold, silver and other gems) have been gathered in forest. This is one of the source of enriching the coffer of the kings. The constellation of stars called *mrigshira* in heaven (3-43-37), and this deer on earth are worthy of possession."

Saying thus Ram asked Lakshaman to get ready with bow and weapons and guard Sita carefully. He also indicated to the readily available assistance of Jatayu around there.

### **3-44 Ram killed the deer (27 / 1395)**

Ram equipped himself with sword, bow and arrow. Coming out he moved towards the deer which kept moving swiftly from one place to another. Sometimes it appeared very close and instantly disappeared to be seen at a far place. It also continued hide and seek among the trees. This way Ram was dragged chasing him for a long distance in forest. At one place, on green grass, Ram paused for a while and then decided to kill the deer. He took out a potential shaft of Brahma and loading on the bow discharged towards the deer. The deer was hit in the chest and tossing to the height of a palm tree it fell in the real form of the demon bleeding profusely.

Ram saw the dying demon and found Lakshaman's guess correct, "It was Marich." While dying Marich cried loudly imitating in the voice of Ram, "Hey, Sita ! Hey, Lakshaman !"

His voice caused much concern to Ram, "This would worry Lakshaman and Sita." He became scared and his body hair stood erect. Gathering some fruits on way, anxious Ram soon left for his *ashram*.

### **3-45 Lakshaman driven out to Ram (40 / 1435)**

When Sita heard the cry of Marich, she lost her balance and asked Lakshaman to move immediately to Ram. Lakshaman was not disturbed, and he stood on his position. Sita was scared and began prattling, "You want to grab me. Could be this was your motive while coming from Ayodhya, or Bharat would have plotted this. Your elder brother is in distress, he cried for help, and you don't move to help him."

Lakshaman assured her, “No creation in this world, be they gods, demons, birds, gandharva or any other celestial beings, is capable of facing Ram. After the killing Khar, the demons are trying to avenge and this cry is totally deceptive and false only to misguide us. I can’t leave you unprotected.”

She again used rough words and threatened Lakshaman, “ I would prefer to be drowned in Godavari, or topple down from the high hills, take deadly poison but never be yours.”

Hearing her unusual prattling, Lakshaman didn’t reply and mentioned, “O, gods of the forest, all creatures and plants, listen, I am being forced to quit her alone. Take care of her. I would now move to my elder brother Ram. Shall I be able to see her again when I come back? ”

Sita continued her prattle and beating her belly and chest she kept cursing Lakshaman. Lakshaman offered his mild salutation and moved away from there.

### 3-46 Ravan appeared as an ascetic (38 / 1473)

Ravan disguised in an ascetic garb had reddish cloth, tuft of hair (*shikha*), umbrella, footwear, and a baton over left shoulder helping to carry water pot. He went nearer to Sita who was lamenting with tears in her eyes for her husband. The presence of formidable Ravan as an ascetic caused sense of fear in the Dandak, “The leaves of the trees didn’t shake, wind stopped, Godavari had a slowed down in flow.”

Ravan looked upon Sita as if Mars and Saturn (3-46-5/6) had malefic aspect over *rohini nakshatra*. She was immersed in anxiety about her husband, and Ravan appeared to her as if Saturn had conjunction with *chitra nakshatra* (3-46-10).

Ravan addressed her, “Who are you? Are you one among Lakshami, or wife of cupid, Rati ? Your beauty doesn’t have any parallel. This forest is not inhabited by gods, *kinnar* or *gandharva*, rather it is infested with demons. You are fit for a royal dwelling, how did you come here in deep and deadly forest visited frequently by lions, tigers, elephants and deadly man eating devils?

Seeing an ascetic arrived, she rose to offer respect. She brought water and fruits and putting on the mat mentioned, “Take water, and fruits, which I can offer in your honour.”

Saying thus her eyes gazed outside to locate Ram but except green and dense forest she couldn’t find him coming.

### 3-47 Sita rebuked Ravan (50 / 1523)

Sita reflected on the queries of the Brahmin ascetic with fear of his curse if she didn’t answer; she replied, “I am daughter of the king of Mithila, Janak and married to Ram, the king of Awadh. After the marriage, I stayed for twelve years (3- 47-4) at Ayodhya enjoying the royal facilities at the fort of the family of Ikshavaku, the king Dasarath. In the thirteenth year (3- 47-5) the king Dasarath with the advice of the ministers and well wishers desired to crown Ram as successor prince. The mother-in-law Kaikeyi then

claimed her boons from the king (i) crown to Bharat, and (ii) exile to Ram. The king was shocked, and he persuaded Kaikeyi to allow the crowning of my husband without any obstacle for which he promised her all the valuables she could desire to have. At that time my husband was of twenty-five<sup>5</sup> and I was eighteen (3- 47-10/11) from my Birth. Kaikeyi repeated the claims in front of Ram, who immediately honored the words of his father, and left for forest. I also followed him, and he was joined by his brother, Lashaman, a valiant prince in his forest life. My husband is righteous and adherent of truth. You wait here for some time, and he would be coming with lots of delicious fruits and roots.”

Saying this, Sita enquired from Ravan his introduction. Ravan spoke in egoistic words, “I am Ravan, a terror for gods, demons and humans. Sita, I have abducted several beautiful women in the past. My capital is Lanka situated at a mountain top surrounded by sea. You are fit to become my wife and once you are in Lanka you will find several comfortable groves for your pleasure. You will be served by five thousand beautiful maidens.”

Hearing the terrifying words of Ravan, Sita retorted, “My husband Ram is like a high and stable mountain, deep sea, and valiant Indr. You sinner, demon ! I am a lioness, and you are a jackal. Your this desire to have me is like: weighing *mandrachal*, touching the burning sun by naked fingers, wiping eyes with needles, cleaning knives with tongue, drinking deadly poison *kalkut* and still desirous of survival, willing to possessing sun and moon together, and trying to collect fire in a cloth.”

She gave several examples to belittle him outrightly. She was so much agitated, that her body shook like leaves of banana.

### 3-48 Sita continued rebuking Ravan (24 / 1547)

With an intention to intimidate her Ravan spoke, “I am Ravan on whose indication gods dare move. When I am at a place, the leaves of the trees stop, wind slows down, river stops flowing. Sun looks like moon. I won over Lanka from my brother Kuber and now he has found a shelter in Kailash. His pushpak viman is in my possession. The city of Lanka reverberates with the movement of elephants, chariots on its wide roads. When I grow angry, Indr looks to me for command. You are lucky that I have come to you. Once you are with me, you will forget about your banished and weak husband.”

Sita rebuked him, “You are mean that you tortured your cousin Kuber. Someone can escape punishment by abducting Shachi, wife of Indr, but he can’t go unpunished by taking away me from my husband Ram.”

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<sup>5</sup> Ram had left with Vishwamitr, and soon he helped him in completing his *ygya*. Thereafter, he got back to Ayodhya via Janakpur where he was married to Sita. This suggests that age of twelve indicated by Marich in sarg 38 here in *Aranya kand* is more appropriate than that indicated by Dasarath in *Balkand sarg* 20. In fact, Dasarath’s statement about his age was general in nature just to convince Viswamitr that he was below sixteen, and how could he be able to protect his *ygya*. In scriptures, sixteen is demarcating age above which one is considered able to take up all sorts of responsibilities.

**3-49 Sita abducted (40 / 1587)**

Ravan discarding his artificial form assumed his original form of the demon. He was seen in ten heads with twenty hands. He looked like a dark cloud with golden ornaments over his body. He was looking formidable and he spoke to Sita, "None of the gods can face me. I can dry ocean, and tear the earth apart, and hole up into sun with my arrows. You need to forget your ascetic husband and come with me."

Saying thus, he picked up Sita holding her hair by left hand, and supporting her both thighs by his right hand. This act of Ravan was as sinful as *budh* (a planet and son of moon from *rohini*) holding the hair of his mother *rohini* (3-49-16). Seeing Ravan in terrifying form, gods of the forest ran away. His vast chariot carried by asses appeared and he put Sita inside the chariot. When the chariot flew in the sky, Sita began crying loudly like a crazy woman, "O, Lakshaman, you are unaware, the demon in disguise has abducted me. O, Ram, you are known for your fair justice, how did you leave Ravan unpunished?" She, offering her salutations, addressed one by one various natural entities : trees, river Godavari, and *kaner* flowers etc. to intimate Ram that she had been abducted by Ravan.

She saw Jatayu on a tree top and crying spoke to him, "You can't stop this butcher, but kindly convey my husband Ram and brother Lakshaman that Ravan had abducted me."

**3-50 Jatayu defied Ravan ( 28 / 1615)**

Jatayu was sleeping, but when he heard the crying sound of Sita, he discarded his sleep and addressed Ravan, "You are king and such act of abducting a woman doesn't suit you. As you protect your wife from other persons, similarly you shouldn't touch other's wife. The misdeeds of a king, generate the tendency among citizens to repeat those sinful acts. My age is now sixty thousand years, and I have been protecting birds since long. You are young, compared to me. I am weaponless and you are fully equipped with them, still I won't allow you to take away Sita stealthily in absence of her husband. Ram and Lakshaman are far away from here. If I go to intimate them, you will run away. I can't afford to wait for them, and I shall fight and won't allow you to take her away from here."

**3-51 Jatayu fought until last (46 / 1666)**

Jatayu attacked over Ravan with his wings and claws. Ravan charged several tough arrows over him which he withstood easily. Flying close to his seat in the chariot, Jatayu snatching the bow from his threw that broken over ground. Ravan picked up another bow and showered arrows over Jatayu.

Surrounded by arrows he looked like living in his nest. He didn't care his arrows and again snatched and broke his second bow. With his wings he kept beating Ravan. Further he killed the asses carrying his chariot. Then he took off the head of the charioteer. Subsequently when he broke auto-flying axle of the chariot, Ravan fell on ground but he was holding Sita on his left lap with his left hands. He had lost his chariot,

and he was grounded. Ravan understood that Jatayu being old is tired now, and holding Sita he maintained to fly again in sky.

Jatayu sat over his back, and kept pounding with his wings and claws over his left arms. The left side ten arms were broken and he fell down over the ground. Although, his new left arms soon sprang up, he released the hold on Sita, and commenced fighting with Jatayu. The weapons of Jatayu were wings, beak and nails. Ravan had become weaponless but he had his sword with him. He pulled out the sword and cut his wings, and claws. Jatayu fell bleeding over ground. His body was like dark cloud spotted with white belly. Sita ran and took him with full affection in her folds.

### **3-52 Ravan flew away with Sita (44 / 1710)**

Sita continued lamenting over the plight of Jatayu. Ravan again rushed to her while she ran from one plant to another and embraced them to save herself. She continued crying for Ram and Lakshaman.

He caught hold of her hair and lifted again in the sky holding her in his lap. With his this atrocity of holding Sita by hair, sun and wind gods were ashamed. There was darkness all around. Brahma was also ashamed to see this act of Ravan and he expressed, "The climax has reached now." Sages were ashamed and understood the imminent end of Ravan.

While Ravan was moving away fast in sky, various ornaments continued dropping down from the body of Sita. When one of the anklets dropped down from one of her legs, there was a scene of occurrence of lightening. One by one the ornaments were coming down as if meteorites were falling from the sky. When she lost her necklace down her chest, it appeared as if the Ganga descended down to earth.

She continued crying and addressing Ram and Lakshaman, "The bad omens of birds and animals are observed all over, but Ram and Lakshaman unaware of my abduction have appeared to failed to notice them."

### **3-53 Sita denounced Ravan (26 / 1736)**

Sita continued condemning him for abducting her in absence of her husband, "The deceptive deer was, for sure your creation. You cajoled my husband away from me. You are a sinner, and soon you will reach the place where Khar had been sent. By Killing aged and elder bird-king, Jatayu, you call yourself hero, rather you must feel ashamed for this. The banks of vaitarini and deadly hell with pointed nails await your arrival. The one who alone eliminated fourteen thousand demons without taking assistance from his valiant brother, would soon deal you to your end."

### **3-54 Sita brought to Lanka (30 / 1766)**

While she was forcibly being carried away from sky, Sita spotted five excellent monkeys sitting over a hill top. She collected her ornaments, tied them in a cloth piece and

dropped them down to those monkeys, expecting they would deliver her message to Ram and Lakshaman. While doing so she was crying for Ram and Lakshaman. Ravan didn't notice her dropping the ornaments for he was not composed and immersed in deep anxiety. Crossing pampa zone, soon Ravan crossed the sea, house of Varun. The plight of Sita grieved sea god so much that tides fell flat, fish and other creatures became static.

When Ravan entered Lanka he dropped Sita in his inner palace and deputed demoness on guard forewarning them not to hurt her feeling. He made the treasury of ornaments and precious cloths open for Sita.

In order to keep eyes on developments in Janasthan, he met eight deadly demons and deputed them on duty to Janasthan. He mentioned to them, "Ram had killed fourteen thousand demons along with Khar and Dushan. You all eight are my trusted hands and you have to take the responsibility of filling the void created by absence of those valiant demons killed by Ram. Be on alert, and try to take revenge by killing Ram. Keep me posted with all the developments from there." Thus commanded by Ravan, those eight demons left for Janasthan.

### **3-55 Sita in inner palace ( 37 / 1803)**

Ravan saw Sita pale and sad with tears in her eyes. In order to impress and win her favour, he forcibly took her all around his inner palace. The structures were decorated with gems and precious stones. Pillars and floors had lacings of colorful diamonds. The windows were made of ivory and silver with window grills made of gold. Number of groves and ponds were beautifully decorated. He asked Sita to enjoy the royal facilities of Lanka and forget about that ascetic Ram. Lanka is well fortified by surrounding sea. The expanse of city is in one hundred *yojan*. It is humanly impossible to come here to release you. Lastly, he placed his ten heads over her feet to seek her favour and accept the position of head queen. He committed that all his previous wives would remain her maid.

### **3-56 Sita in *ashok van* (36 / 1839)**

Sita took a straw between her and Ravan as a screen and spoke, "My father-in-law Dasarath was truthful person. My husband Ram is committed to righteousness and truthfulness. If you had committed your act of abducting in presence of my husband, you would have been sent to *yamlok* like Khar and Dushan. Your balance life is short. As the *ganga* erodes the bank, similarly your sins have eroded your life. Gods may not be able to kill you, but you won't be able to escape the wrath of Ram. I am like a sacred sacrificing fire square where *chandal* (like you) can't find access. You do what you like with my transient and inert body, but I don't want to retain it any longer."

When Sita became quiet, Ravan threatened her with ultimatum, "I spare your life for twelve months (**3-56-24**). Thereafter my cook will prepare a feast dish using your body."

He commanded the maids to take her to *ashok van*, and using carrot and stick policy try to bring her around.

### **3-57(A)<sup>6</sup> Indr offered Sita divine milk and rice porridge (26 / 1865)**

Brahma took initiative and advised Indr to visit Sita in Lanka to offer her divine porridge made of milk and rice otherwise she might lose her life. Indr arrived in Lanka and with the help of goddess of slumber (*nidra devi*) , kept demons sleeping. He went straight to Sita in *ashok van* and introducing himself tried to convince her that for the welfare of Ram and Lakshaman it was necessary that she must retain her life and that could only be done if she ate something to sustain her life. From this intention he had brought divine porridge made of milk and rice, and if she took that once she would stay for indefinite period without hunger and thirst.

Sita didn't believe him, and asked him to demonstrate his genuineness. When Indr showed her, "He could stay without touching ground, his eyes didn't wink, his cloths didn't gather dust, and the flowers around his neck remained ever fresh", she could trust him and took that porridge.

First she made a mental offer of that porridge to her husband Ram and his brother Lakshaman wishing their long life and then took that porridge to win over the need of hunger and thirst.

Happily Indr with goddess of slumber (*nidra devi*) left Lanka.

### **3-57 (B) Ram notice bad omens ( 23 / 1888)**

On his return journey, after killing Marich, he heard a jackal wailing on his back. He also noticed deer and other birds moving keeping him on their left. Their sound were also terrifying. All these signs of bad omen created deep anxiety in his mind.

Pondering over the possible happenings he continued pacing towards his *ashram*, "Hearing the false cry of Marich, Lakshaman must have become uncomfortable, and he would have moved out in search of me. Finding Sita alone, the demons must have finished her."

Thus reflecting, he was moving, and to his surprise he could see Lakshaman coming towards him. First in harsh words, and then with mild voice, he spoke to Lakshaman, "What you did my brother ! you shouldn't have left her alone. The bad omens produced by the animals and birds, and my left eye pulsating time and again suggest something adverse had already taken place with Sita."

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<sup>6</sup> This *sarg* is not common in several versions available of Valmiki ramayan. Geeta Press has included this incident of visiting Indr Sita in Lanka as a desirable reading material.



**3-58 Ram couldn't find Sita (20 / 1908)**

Thinking aloud, Ram continued, "Sita who followed me from Ayodhya, appears to have been targeted by the demons. If she is not alive, I would also shed my life. Kaikeyi's objective of sending me in forest would be more fruitful. My mother Kauslya, in case of my death, would have no option than to serve Kaikeyi. While arriving at the ashram if Sita doesn't welcome with her smile, I won't survive in her absence. It seems hearing the cry of the demon in my voice, Sita forced you to depart for my protection. In any case, your this decision of leaving her alone is a blunder."

When they arrived at the ashram she was found missing. Ram searched inside, and all her favorite places outside. She was not located anywhere. Ram lost his balance, his face became pale and was immersed in deep and untold sorrow."

**3-59 Discourses between Ram and Lakshaman (27 / 1935)**

**Note:** This sarg contains the talk between Ram and Lakshaman when Lakshaman met him on his return journey.

Ram asked, "Why did you leave her alone? The bad omens of animals, birds and my left eye pulsation indicate the occurrence of something adverse with Sita."

Lakshaman narrated under what situation he left her alone, "Hearing your voice of Lakshaman ! save me! She became very agitated and asked me to move to you. When I didn't respond, she used very harsh and unimaginable words against me. She called me an agent of Bharat, and also a selfish man who wanted to grab her when you die. I tried to assure her about your undefeatable potential by any of the creation. She didn't heed to my words and on her repeat of harsh words against me, with my sullen eyes with anger, without replying her, I left the ashram."

Ram didn't approve his act of leaving Sita alone and mentioned, "The voice seeking your help was false. When I charged my arrow on him, he discarded his disguised form, and appeared in his real form of a demon. While dying he uttered those words as if I uttered those words seeking your help."

**3-60 Lamenting enquiry about Sita (38 / 1973)**

While searching her, Ram approached all the entities of forest: varieties of trees - *Kadmab, Arjun, Kakubh, Kaner* etc. Comparing similarity of her certain limbs with a given tree he continued asking from them about her where about. On way seeing deer and lions he enquired from them about her. The lake and river Godavari were also enquired whether Sita's location was known to them.

He also thought, "She is hiding somewhere, and moved around several plants and trees to locate her."

He guessed, "Demons must have devoured her alive."

He wandered from one forest to another, crossing several mountains, and rivers. He asked Lakshaman whether he was able to see her anywhere.

### **3-61 Ram and Lakshaman kept hunting (31 / 2004)**

They found the mat and flowers scattered on the floor of the *ashram*. She was not traceable within *ashram*, nor beyond that on lakes and rivers. Ram cried, "Don't play such joke with me, Sita. It is not time for kidding and hiding." Not getting any response, he repeated his doubts, "She must have been abducted or devoured by the demons."

In her absence, I won't survive longer. On my death, I would soon join my father in the other world. Seeing me there he would ask, "You didn't adhere to your commitment, and without completing the term of forest you came here."

Lakshaman consoling him spoke, "It is not time for only lamenting. Let us hunt vigorously at all probable places." Continuing search far and wide, and calling her name at loudest of voice, they couldn't find any clue. Ignoring Lakshaman's consolation, Ram commenced loud lamentation.

### **3-62 Lamenting Ram (20 / 2024)**

Like a crazy person he cried with the flowers and trees, "O, banana plant! O, Arjun !, O, Kaner! you can't hide her." He would then repeat the probability of her being killed or abducted by the demons. He mentioned, "What shall I respond to Janak, when he will ask about her.."

He commanded Lakshaman, "Leave immediately for Ayodhya. I would be here in forest, and tell Bharat to rule the entire globe for ever. I am not coming back. Inform the mothers in detail what happened with Sita."

Lakshaman was also gripped by remorse, when he saw Ram lamenting bitterly.

### **3-63 Lamenting Ram.....continued ( 20 / 2044)**

Ram mentioned, "My past deeds are responsible for my this plight. I lost my crown; I lost my mothers and well wishers; I lost my father; and now I lost my lovely Sita. The demons must have dragged her in forest. She must have been abducted from sky route. Her warm blood must have been drank by demons."

He enquired from Sun and Wind, "You are witness to all good and bad deeds. Nothing is unknown to you. Tell me about her."

Lakshaman was also in grief, but composing himself, he exhorted Ram to have courage and try to locate her than to keep lamenting.

### **3-64 Ram in wrath (77 / 2121)**

Ram asked Lakshman to go and see whether Sita was in river Godavari. Lakshaman tried all around Godavari but couldn't find her. Ram himself went to River Godavari and

asked Godavari to tell the clues about her. Other forest entities also silently sought the assistance of Godavari in divulging the incident. Nothing came out of her.

Lamenting Ram mentioned to hunt her in river *Mandakini*, *Janasthan*, and *prasravan* mountain. He was grieved, "What answer shall I give to Janak and mother of Sita."

When he moved further he shouted, "Lakshaman, the flocks of deer are trying to say something." He approached one of them and asked about with a wailing voice. The deer raised their heads up towards sky and then ran towards south. Lakshaman got the tips and advised Ram to follow them. Soon moving southward, they reached to a place where flowers were found scattered. Ram identified those flowers of Sita. Ram expressed his obligation to sun, wind and earth who had protected those flowers of Sita to extend clue about her.

Turning around towards prasravan mountain and river Godavari, Ram grew angry and spoke harsh words, "If you don't tell me about her I would destroy your tops, trees and dry up the river and lakes."

The mountains and Godavari then revealed some clue, "The large footprints of demon were seen". Ram picked up the direction of those footprints, and soon he saw small footprints of Sita. A little away from there he found scattered the pieces of jewels of Sita. Still farther from there, spoils of broken chariot, dead asses wearing protective shield and a dead body of charioteer with lace in hand were visible. Next to that, broken bows and ground strewn with two quivers and arrows were seen.

Ram thought and mentioned, "Demons must have torn apart Sita, and drinking her blood fought among themselves. None of the gods came to her rescue. The slayer of Tripur demon, Shiv also kept quiet. Indr and other gods have taken my traits of compassion as my weakness. Now onwards, Lakshaman, you will see my real terrible form and how I deal with the demons and other beings. I will stop the movement of stars and planets. Rivers, lakes and seas will dry up. If the gods don't return my Sita to me I will demonstrate my potential."

He picked up the bow from Lakshaman and mentioned in full wrath, "Old age, time, and death never spare any entity in this world. Similarly, I would also not be contained by anything here."

### **3-65 Lakshaman pacified Ram (16 / 2137)**

Seeing his rare form of wrath, Lakshaman tried to pacify him, "You had been known for your compassionate and friendly gesture. Like the coolness of moon, brilliance of sun, dynamism of wind and tolerance of earth, you can't shed your compassion to the beings of the creation."

He further sought help from him in finding out, "Who is the culprit for abducting Sita? Only one chariot has been found to be spoiled here which suggests that it was not a fight between two or more chariot riding warriors, nor trace of army contingent is noticeable

here. The ground is soaked with blood and this suggests terrible fight has taken place here. For one culprit let there be no harm caused to other innocent beings.”

Lakshaman further mentioned, “We will hunt out ocean, forests and mountains to reveal the truth of the incident. If gods don’t help in our endeavour, you will be free to penalize the world as per your wish.”

### **3-66 Lakshaman counseled Ram to reasons (21 / 2158)**

Ram appeared tired with the deep stricken grief. He looked sick, and Lakshaman brought him to state of relaxation by massaging his feet. While doing so he also mentioned, “The king Dasarath had attained you as son, after a great and humble effort. Bharat had rightly mentioned that your virtues had been source of strength to Dasarath. Every person, gods and other beings pass through the cycle of sorrow and pleasure. During the period of calamity, the courageous ones don’t lose their patience. If, in anger, you penalize the entire creation, who will provide them succor. Your concerted effort should be used to destroy the real culprit. For someone’s fault don’t indiscriminately penalize others.

### **3-67 Jatayu spotted (29 / 2187)**

Ram got his cool back and asked Lakshaman for further action. Lakshaman advised, “We must concentrate first in Janasthan which is abode of demons, gandharva and kinnara.” They together moved forward, with the bow loaded with the shaft called Kshur. Soon a huge body wet with blood was seen. Ram took that one as a demon who was lying flat after devouring Sita. He moved angrily with his bow in that direction saying to kill that immediately.

Jatayu heard his voice and spoke feebly, “Ravan had abducted Sita and my life as well. When I saw him abducting Sita, I attacked over him and damaged his chariots, killed carrying asses, and charioteer, broke his bows and scattered his arrows, he finally cut my wings and claws with sword. I am almost dead, don’t further kill me.”

Hearing Jatayu’s voice, Ram fell unconscious and on regaining it back, began lamenting embracing him closely. He cursed his ill luck, “I suffered banishment, lost wife, and now lost the dear friend of my father as well.” Both the brothers lamented deeply for Jatayu’s plight.

### **3-68 Jatayu cremated (38 / 2225)**

Ram composing himself again asked, “How did he do the abduction? What Sita conveyed for us?”

Jatayu could respond in a feeble voice, “Ravan is a great deceptive demon. He caused storm and rain and took her away. The moment (*muhurt*) at the time of abduction of Sita was *vind* (3-68-13) . This *muhurt* is auspicious in the sense that the stolen item in this *muhurt* is retrieved. After injuring me mortally he moved in the south. ”

He wanted to speak something more, "Ravan is son of Vishrwa and brother of Kuber." Thereafter he lost his consciousness and dropped dead on the ground.

Ram wept bitterly for his loss and asked Lakshaman to make preparations for his cremation for he was dearer like father. Soon the fire wood were collected and rubbing two woods together, the flame was obtained. Keeping his body on pyre, Ram performed the last rites. Collecting roots and fruits he offered *pind* (ritual oblation in honour of the deceased) over kush. Both brothers offered water oblation in the river Godavari, and prayed for his emancipation.

### **3-69 Ayomukhi penalized (51 / 2276)**

After the performance of last rites of Jatayu, both the brothers moved towards south-west (*nairut* ). They crossed a lonely and deep forest. After that they moved about three *kos* in the south and arrived in the forest called *kronch*. The place was full of birds and trees and they hunted for Sita around there. From there moving about three *kos* in the east they reached the *ashram* of Matang *muni*. This was deep and dark forest. From there they saw a deep cave and near to that they found an ugly and dreadful demoness who was cruel in killing the beings in the forest. She came close to them and embracing Lakshaman closely she offered herself as his wife. Lakshaman pulled his sword and cut down his nose, ears and breasts. Crying terribly she ran away in the cave.

Lakshaman felt bad omen and he spoke to Ram, "My left arm is pulsating which indicates bad omen, but at the same time the sound of the *vanjul* bird is suggestive of our victory." They moved forward and soon they felt heavy storm. Before they could find out the cause, they found a deadly wall type demon before them. The demon was headless only the body was visible. The head had entered its belly, and the forehead was seen in the chest. This had one eye over the forehead. Its arms were long and extendable to several *yojan*. They found themselves in the trap of the demon. Lakshaman advised Ram to allow him to be a prey of the demon, and he should escape to locate Sita. The demon cried and enquired about the identity of the two brothers, and mentioned, "I hungry and looking for food. In the meanwhile both of you fell in my grip."

### **3-70 Kbandh lost the arms (19 / 2295)**

He was about to devour them, that Lakshaman advised Ram, "Let us cut the arms of this demon. The strength of the demon lies in its arms." Soon, Ram cut down the right arm and Lakshaman cut down the left arm. The demon was bleeding profusely. When the demon asked about their identity, Lakshman spoke, "He is my elder brother Ram and I am his younger Lakshaman. Kaikeyi hindering his crowing sent him to forest. We were staying in Dandak that a demon had abducted his wife Sita. We are in search of Sita."

Hearing Lakshaman, the demon recalled his past incident. He welcome them, and appreciated his luck for their glimpse and began narrating the story of his ugly demon body.

### 3-71 Autobiography of Kabandh ( 34 / 2329)

Kabandh narrated his story, “I was well built and handsome like moon and sun. I used to pester sages for fun. Once I assumed a deadly form and scared the sage Sthulshira. He became angry and cursed me to remain in the deadly form of a demon. When I prayed him, he assured my emancipation by Ram. Later, with my hard penance I pleased Brahma. He blessed me long life. Once I had an encounter with Indr. He pounded his *vajr* over me, which drove my legs and head inside my body. When I prayed Indr, he blessed me with one *yojan* long arms and created mouth in my belly. He also assured my salvation from Ram.”

Submitting thus, he requested Ram to arrange for his cremation so that he may get back his previous excellent celestial body, and then I would give you location of such a person who would help you in locating your wife.

When curious Ram enquired about the location of Sita, Kabandh replied, “Before cremation I can’t tell you anything because my celestial senses are not retrieved. Once you cremate me I would be able to help you.

### 3-72 Kabandh cremated (27 / 2356)

Soon both the brothers pushed him in a big ditch and lit fire around him. His body burnt, and there arose a celestial being dressed in excellent cloth decorated with ornaments. He rode a chariot drawn by royal swan, and from the sky he addressed Ram, “There are six strategy of prosperity: *sandhi*, *vigrah*, *yan*, *aasan*, *dwaiddhibhav*, and *samashrya*. At the moment you are in distress due to loss of your wife. You should try to make friendship with person of similar category who is also in distress. There is one valiant monkey, called Sugriv who stays at *Rishyamuk* spread over to *pampa sarovar*. He is accompanied by four friends, and he has been tortured and banished by his brother Vali. You should forge friendship with Sugriv. He is son of sun god from *riksharaja*, and over the globe no place is unknown to him. He is a warrior, strong and capable. Keeping fire in witness, you should establish your friendship with him, and he would find out the exact location of Sita.”

### 3-73 Pampa sarovar and rishyamuk mountain (46 / 2402)

Staying up in the sky, mounting the celestial chariot, Kabandh gave details of movement to lake *pampa* and mountain *rishyamuk*. He mentioned, “Due west from here is forests of plenty of fruit bearing trees. Keep crossing them one after another. You will reach pampa lake where birds keep on chirping. The bank and bed of the lake doesn’t have pinching pebbles or slippery soil. The presence of sandy soil has made it more comfortable. You will enjoy offering delicious fruits from the surrounding area, to the varieties of fish (*rohu*, *vakratund*, and *nalmeen*) swimming in the lake water. Water of this lake is scented with the fragrance of lotus flower. While you will enjoy playing with the fish, Lakshaman may offer you palatable and lotus fragrant water of the lake in the bowl made from the leaves of lotus. Water is crystal clear, and has curative

characteristics against several diseases. In the evening mighty monkeys land on the bank of the lake to take water. They stay in the caves of the surrounding mountains. You may see red and blue lotus flowers deep inside water. Those flowers are inaccessible and they remain fresh and never wither out. It is said to serve Matang muni, scores of sages had settled there. They used to carry fruits and flowers for the sage. The sweat drops from their body had caused the flower bearing plants and they never dry or wither out. Now you will not find those sages, but Shabri attendant to those sages still stay there. She is always engaged in the righteous deeds. Upon your glimpse, she will depart to heaven because you are ever respected and glorified<sup>7</sup> (3-73-27 त्वां तु धर्मे स्थिता नित्यं सर्वभूतनमस्कृतम् ) by all the beings.

On the western bank of *pampa* you may have a look at rare *ashram* not visible to ordinary beings. Due to the glory of the sage Matang, elephants never trespass that *ashram*. The forest there is known after the sage Matang.

On the east of *pampa* is *rishyamuk parvat* (mountain). Because of snakes and small elephants, It is tough to climb this mountain. It is said to be created by Brahma. Those who dream over this mountain realize the same when awoke. The sinners are equally penalized by the demons over here. The trumpeting of elephants staying in *matang van* are heard at top of *rishyamuk*.

There is cave at the top of *rishyamuk* which is closed by a heavy rock mass. On the eastern side of the cave there is a lovely pond and grove of fruit bearing trees, and Sugriv stays there. He also comes out and enjoys the open top of the mountain."

Describing thus the details of travel, Kabandh advised Ram to go there and forge friendship with Sugriv which would be very beneficial for him. Ram and Lakshaman, before they departed, wished to Kabandh, "Depart for your celestial abode now."

### 3-74 Ram with Shabari (35 / 2437)

As indicated by Kabandh, Ram and Lakshaman continued their journey to *pampa* and before reaching there they stayed on way at one mountain. On the west of *pampa* they visited the ashram of shabari. She offered revered salutation to them, and treated them with water of *padya*, *arghya* and *achamniyam* (to wash feet, hands and mouth) and varieties of delicious fruits. When Ram enquired about her spiritual progress, she responded positively. She asserted, "When I see you here, I take it as success to all my penance." Shabari mentioned, "When you were at *Chitrakoot*, my mentors left for the divine abode. While departing they assured me about your arrival here with your brother Lakshaman. I am very fortunate to see you here now as a consequence of my life long effort."

<sup>7</sup> Another categorical expression emphasizing supreme divinity of Ram.

Ram expressed his desire to visit the ashram of her mentors. She gladly took him around and mentioned, "See the surrounding forest, it is called *matang van*. My mentors used to offer fire oblation here. When they became very weak due to advanced aged, this altar was used to offer flower to gods. This altar still glows with brilliance. When they were not able to move, their concern brought forth the appearance of a pond called *saptsagar theerth*, which has water from all the seven oceans. After bath, the bark and loin cloth put by them for drying in air are still here. The worship garlands made by them using lotus flowers are still afresh."

Describing thus, Shabari expressed her wish to depart to the world of her mentor sages. Ram approved her proposal and she offered her physical form to the fire and got transformed into divine form with divine apparel. She moved to her cherished divine abode of the sages.

### **3-75 Ram at *pampa sarovar* (30 / 2467)**

Ram and Lakshaman appreciated the sacred *ashram* of the sages and the *saptsagar theeth*. In that *theerth*, they offered water oblation to their forefathers. Thereafter, with an excitement to meet Sugriv they left for *pampa sarovar*. On the other side of the lake was *rishyamuk* where Sugriv was staying. Ram with Lakshaman enjoyed the natural scene surrounding *pampa*. Its water was crystal clear showing distinctly the sand bed below. The varieties of flowers had magnified the charm of the lake. The mosaic of colours had been created by the presence of red louts, white *kumud* (lilies), and blue lotus. To attain relaxation, Ram got into *pampa* water. The pleasing scene surrounding *pampa* drove his mind to Sita, and her memory made him sad again.



Srimate Ramanujay namah**Preface**

This fourth submission depicting *Kishkindha kand*, presenting condensed *Valmiki Ramayan*, is in sequence of earlier three submissions of *Bal*, *Ayodhya*, and *Aranya*.

This *kand* is unique in presenting graphic description of global geography, covering trees, animals, forests, mountains, rivers and lakes. Continuing from *Aranya kand*, one can have idea of ancient *kishkindha*, near Hampi in Karnataka, India.

There are 67 *sarg* in this *kand*. They consist of total 2362 *sanskrit shlok*. The *shlok* in earlier three submissions had been 9,043 and putting this fourth one of *Kishkindha* together, the sum total goes to 11,405 for initial four *kand* of *Valmiki Ramayan*.

The divinity of Hanuman (variously known as *Anjaneya*) is revealed in last two *sarg* of 66 and 67. Before one embarks upon studying *sundar kand*, it is essential to go through *kishkindha* also.

**Srimann Narayan Charnau Sharnam Prapaddye.** (श्रीमन्नारायण चरणौ शरणम् प्रपदे )

Submission:

Srikrishna Prapnnachari  
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*Srimate Ramanujaya namah*

## **Kishkindha kaand**

(67 sarg)

### **4-1 Pampa to rishyamuk (130/130)**

*Pampa* had an attractive natural canvas. The fruit and flower bearing trees were loaded with delicious and fragrant yields. Birds and animals enjoyed the cool and fragrant breeze. Water of *pampa* was clear and scented with varieties of floating lotuses.

The breeze of *chaitra*<sup>1</sup> (4-1-10/36, *chaitra* is also called *pushp mas* or *surbhi mas* which means month of flowers and fragrance) month digs deep into the affectionate emotions of a young couple. Ram was not an exception, and he got into the grip of sweet memory of Sita at *panchavati*. The lotuses represented various limbs of Sita (face, eyes, hands) and her favourite fragrances. Lamenting the absence of Sita, and imagining her probable plight in the hands of the demon, Ram reminded Lakshaman, "Being at *pampa* if Sita joins back, I would never go to Ayodhya for such a rare naturally rich environment is hardly available anywhere else."

Being encouraged by Lakshaman, Ram mustered his patience and composing back to the objective of locating Sita, he moved towards *rishyamuk*. Sugriv, while roaming around, had a view of Ram and Lakshaman approaching his hiding place. He grew apprehensive of enemy's (Vali's) plot against him. Zone of *Matang ashram* was a safe place for the monkeys persecuted by Vali (बाली), and therefore, Sugriv and other monkeys were staying around *pampa* and *rishyamuk*.

### **4-2 Scared Sugriv (29 / 159)**

All the monkeys who saw Ram and Lakshaman moving towards the shelter of Sugriv, moved quickly to Sugriv. Sugriv and his companions had an apprehension of those two bow men to be representative of Vali. Hanuman, staying with them spoke, "I don't see any reason to be panicked. In fact, by inherence monkeys have unstable mind. First be calm, and then let us see, who are they?. This hill top is called *malay* and is safe against the action zone of Vali."

Sugriv advised Hanuman, "These bow-men have long arms and attractive rare personality. Weapons with them, speak of their valiance. They may be sent by Vali to eliminate us. However, first we need to find out and you should go to them as a commoner. Keeping your face towards us, you should talk to them to find out their aim of visiting this area."

<sup>1</sup> When Ram raised *ashram* at *panchavati*, it was *sharad* (आश्विन कार्तिक) season, and once in succeeding season of *hemant* (हेमन्त मार्गशीर्ष पौष *Aranya kand sarg 16, shlok -1*) when he went to Godavari for bath, Lakshaman made a graphic description of the effect of *hemant* (cold) on the natural environment. Here at *pampa*, *chaitra mas* has been described for its cool and fragrant breeze.

### 4-3 Hanuman – a mendicant (39 / 198)

Hanuman gladly moved towards Ram. He was in a guise of a mendicant. Coming closer to them, he paid his deep respect to them. Praising their charming physique, Hanuman spoke, “Both of you have a divine qualities. Looking valiant, equipped with weapons, the ascetics bark has enhanced your personality. Long arms and lotus eyes provide visual delight. Although you don’t wear jewels, but your body is fit for them. In both of you, to me it seems, I see moon and sun coming together on this earth. How did you come in this tough and rugged mountainous forest ? Are you some of the gods ?

With your arrival the charm of this area has been enhanced. The bows you carry are not ordinary, they are marked with gold carvings. The quivers over your shoulder are full of rare quality of arrows. Your swords have golden handle. All of these, suggest something special with you.

With my repeated queries I await your response. Sugriv, a righteous and valiant monkey, stays here. He had been unfairly banished by his brother, and he roams around for shelter. I have been sent by him to you. My name is Hanuman. I am also a monkey. You may consider me his counselor. Sugriv wants to forge friendship with you. I am son of wind god. I am capable of changing my form, and my current form of a mendicant is to understand your identity for the benefit of Sugriv.

When Hanuman became silent, Ram spoke to Lakshaman, “He is secretary to Sugriv. He appears to be knower of *yaju*, *rik*, and *sam veda* (4-3-28). Grammar is in his command. He spoke so eloquently that I am highly impressed by him. Lakshaman, Please respond to him positively.”

As desired by Ram, Lakshaman spoke to Hanuman, “I have come across the qualities of Sugriv. We, both brothers, have arrived here in search of Sugriv. Your proposal to have friendship with Sugriv is acceptable to us and we can do that.”

### 4-4 Hanuman carried Ram and Lakshaman to *rishyamuk* (35 / 233)

Hanuman was glad with the developments and it occurred to his mind, “The indications are favourable to Sugriva. These bow men also have special interest in Sugriv. It seems Sugriv would soon get back his state.”

Hanuman spoke to Ram, “*rishyamuk* has tough forest terrain, why did you come here?” on the indication of Ram, Lakshaman mentioned, “There had been a valiant king Dasarath who had been famous for his good and welfare activities by way of performing several *ygya*. This person here with you, is the eldest son of Dasarath, and his name is Ram. He being the eldest among four sons of the king, has all praiseworthy qualities. When he was to be crowned as successor prince of the king, there arose some obstacle, and he had been banished to forest. He was joined in forest by his wife Sita, and me, his younger brother, Lakshaman as his attendant. Unfortunately, a demon abducted his wife Sita, and in search of Sita, we met a demon named Danu (4-4-14) (refer *Arnya kand*,

**sarg 70 / 71, Kabandh**), who under curse had become a demon. He told us to contact Sugriv who would be helpful in locating Sita.”

When Lakshaman completed his purpose of visit, Hanuman with tears in his eyes welcome them and mentioned, “Sugriv was in need of you. It is his good luck that you came here on your own. His brother, Vali, has disowned him from his share of kingdom, and grabbed his wife. He has been banished and is in need of support. Along with me, he would be able to locate Sita. Let us now move to Sugriv.”

When they moved towards *rishyamuk*, Hanuman restored his original form of the monkey. He carried both the brothers on his shoulders (**4-4-34**) to *rishyamuk*.

#### **4-5 Ram with Sugriv (31 / 264)**

Placing Ram and Lakshaman at *rishyamuk*, Hanuman went to *malay* hill (a part of *rishyamuk*) where Sugriv was staying. He spoke to Sugriv, “These bow men are sons of Dasarath who had been renowned for his thousands of *ygya* and for precious charities of gems, gold, and cows to Brahmins. The eldest is Ram, and the younger is Lakshaman. To honour the words of father given to queen Kaikeyi, Ram came to live in forest. He has been accompanied by his wife Sita and brother Lakshaman. Ravan abducted Sita and they have come to seek your help to locate Sita. I would propose that if you consider it proper, have a friendship with him, and this will be beneficial for you as well.”

Sugriva, immediately came to Ram and offered his hands of friendship, “I am fortunate, and having friendship with you, my position would be elevated since I am a monkey and you are a human being.”

Ram spreading his hands, grabbed Sugriv’s hands, and embraced him. Hanuman lit fire after rubbing two wooden pieces, and both, Ram and Sugriv gave round to fire as a mark of witness of fire god in forging of their friendship.”

Sugriv brought a soft tree branch, and sit over that with Ram. Hanuman also gave a sandal wood branch with flowers to Lakshaman to sit. Sugriv mentioned, “My elder brother Vali has become very cruel to me. Dispossessing me from state, he forcibly grabbed my wife. I am alone and facing unending calamity.”

Indicating to his bow and arrows Ram pledged to eliminate Vali, and restore his right in state and his wife.

#### **4-6 Sugriv with Sita’s jewels (27 / 291)**

When they sat together, Sugriv spoke to Ram, “When you and Lakshaman were not present, Ravan stole away Sita. He killed Jatayu. I swear, it would be my bounden duty to find out Sita, where she is kept, either in netherworld or up in sky. She is like a poison mixed in a food, and no one can digest her. I would retrieve her as *ved* was earlier retrieved from demons.”

Committing his vow, he further revealed, "One day, I with my four ministers were sitting outside. We heard cry of a woman, hey, Ram !, hey, Lashaman !. Being grabbed in the lap of Ravan, she dropped her jewels wrapped in a cloth. I am sure those jewels belong to Sita."

Excited Ram, asked Sugriv to hurry up, and show him her materials. Sugriv brought them from a cave. When Ram had a look at them, he fell in grief, with tear in his eyes. Indicating to Lakshaman he spoke, "See, how Sita had dropped her jewels."

When Lakshaman had a look, he spoke, "I am not aware of the armlet and earrings, since I never saw Sita above her feet. I do know these anklets, for I had been offering regularly my salutation to her lotus feet. "

Ram anxiously enquired from Sugriv, "In which direction she was taken by the demon?. I would eliminate the entire demon race for the fault of only one demon. O, king among monkeys! Help me in locating Sita, and I would soon send that demon to the death world."

#### **4-7 Sugriv consoled Ram (25 / 316)**

When Sugriv found Ram lamenting with tearful eyes, he consoled him, "I am not aware of the secret abode and lineage of that demon. But I promise to find out Sita and retrieve her back to you. With help of monkeys' army I would kill the demons contingent and fulfill the aim of getting back Sita."

Continuing further, Sugriv advised Ram, "Never lament, have courage and demonstrate patience. Being a monkey, I am much inferior to you, but I never lose my heart for my wife. It is patience which pays ultimately. Being a friend, I would like to see you in a healthy state of mind."

Hearing Sugriv, Ram got a shot in the arm, and wiping tears from his face he spoke to him, "I am grateful to you for this precious advice. Let us plan our future actions. I have promised to eliminate cruel Vali from your path. I am adherent to truth, and would never back out from my words."

#### **4-8 Sugriv repeated his sorrow (46 / 362)**

Sugriv got satisfied with the assuring words of Ram. Next day, when they were watching the forest from the hill top, Sugriv broke a soft branch of *sal* and asked Ram to take his seat on that. Hanuman also gave a similar branch to Lashkhaman for sitting.

Sugriv spoke to Ram, "My elder brother grabbed my wife, deposed me from princely seat, but still carries enmity against me. I am not able to understand, how my woes will end. He had been sending several moneys to kill me. When I first saw you, I was mistaken for you to be his agent."

Sugriv's eyes were full of tears, but controlling them he kept talking to Ram. Ram again repeated his vow, "Today I would kill that idiot who had caused so much misery upon



you. In order to assess the strength and weaknesses of both of you, I would like to know in detail the reason of rivalry between you and him.”

#### **4-9 Sugriv narrated the incident (26 / 388)**

Sugriva narrated the incident which lead to the rivalry between the two brothers, “Vali is my elder and we are two brothers from our father Rikshraja. When my father died, Vali being elder was crowned the king of the great state of our father. I had been assisting him as a regal functionary.

There was a demon called Mayavi, he was son of Maya Danav, and elder brother of Dundubhi. Because of some woman, Vali and Mayavi became enemy to each other. Once, at late night, Mayavi came threatenig Vali to Kishkindha. Vali couldn’t bear his challenge, and despite being dissuaded by palace women, he came out to settle score with Mayavi. I also came out to assist him. Seeing both of us, Mayavi took to heels. Vali chased him, and I also followed them. The moon lit night facilitated our pursuit of chasing the demon.

There was a narrow cave, and the demon Mayavi disappeared into that. Vali also followed him, asking me with swear of his feet, to stay outside. One year passed, and there was no news, still I was on the door of the cave all along. I was anxious to go inside, but then I saw stream of blood with foam coming outside. Thereafter, I heard the roaring of the demon. I mistook as the end of Vali, and came back to Kishkindha by putting a rock mass at the door of the cave. I didn’t wish to divulge the incident, but somehow it leaked out, and I was crowned as king in absence of Vali. After sometime, Vali came out, and coming to Kishkindha, he saw me on throne. He became angry. I saluted sincerely on his feet, keeping the crown in his service, he didn’t relent and maintained his full rage against me.”

#### **4-10 Incident elaborated (35 /423)**

Sugriv further elaborated, “When Vali came back, I offered back his kingdom, and assumed the position of his attendant. He called a meeting of the ministers and blamed me guilty. He mentioned that it took him one year in locating the demon inside the cave and thereafter he killed all his kith and kin. When he tried to come out, he found the exit closed, and on shouting my name he didn’t get any response. He considered this act of mine as a severe fault, because I didn’t stay there until his return. The closing the entry by rock mass was another fault which hurt his feelings. Thereafter, he ordered me to leave the kingdom. I had only one cloth on my body, and I was not allowed for any more. He grabbed my wife, and alone I had to run here and there for shelter. Lastly, I came to this hill where he can’t come because of curse.”

Hearing the narration from Sugriv, Ram again assured him to eliminate Vali by his single deadly arrow.

#### 4-11 Mighty Vali (93 / 516)

Hearing the vow of Ram to kill Vali with one arrow, Sugriv felt satisfied. He wanted to acquaint Ram with the great potential of Vali. He mentioned to Ram, "I can understand, you are capable of destroying the entire world, but let me acquaint you with the great potential of Vali, which will enable you to decide further course of action. He is so strong that every morning before sunrise, he visits east sea to west sea, from south ocean to extreme north and never gets tired."

There was a mighty demon in form of a buffalo and he was called Dundubhi. His body was huge like a rain fed cloud, and high like a mountain. Once he went to sea and challenged the sea god for wrestling. Sea god surrendered before him and said, "You may try with the *Himalaya*." He arrived at the Himalaya and caused damages of trees and tossed the rocks up and down. When the god of *Himalaya* appeared, he asked for duel fight. He stood with folded hands and spoke to the demon, "I am a shelter place of saints. I am not able to face you in wrestling. I advise you to try with Vali, son of Indr, at Kishkindha."

Dundubhi came to Kishkindha and with roaring sound he invited Vali for fight. Vali never tolerated any body's challenge. It was night time, and he was inside the palace. The demon spoke, "I grant you tonight to enjoy, and you may face me in the morning. Tonight is the last night for your pleasure. You may decide your inheritor before you come out to face me." Vali ignoring his utterances, appeared on the scene, and taking him by his horns, lifted his body up in air, giving a few rounds dashed him on ground. The ears of the demon began bleeding. The demon got up, and both were engaged in fierce fighting. Vali took him several times up and dashed down on ground. The demon was getting weaker, but Vali felt increasingly more confident. Ultimately, Vali dashing him heavily on ground, pressed him down hard with his feet. The demon was crushed, causing all his veins bursting out with blood, and soon he died. Seeing him dead, Vali lifted his huge body with his two hands and threw it one *yojan* away in the forest.

While doing this some drops of blood fell over the ashram of Matang *muni*. When the sage noticed this, he came out and saw a huge body of a dead demon which had spoiled some of the tree around there. From his saintly power, he could come to know that Vali had done that. He cursed, "Since my *ashram* has been defiled by this act of the monkey, as a result I curse him that If he enters into this forest, he would lose his life. I also forewarn his supporter monkeys to vacate this forest by tomorrow, otherwise I would pronounce deadly curse on them also. I have reared the trees in this forest like my children; one *yojan* area around my *ashram* also shall be out of bounds for Vali."

The monkey supporters of Vali informed him about the curse of the sage. He rushed with folded hands to the sage begging his kind mercy, but the sage didn't listen, and quietly entered into his *ashram*.

Sugriv mentioned, "This area is barred to Vali's movement, and therefore, I stay here, but always I am scared of his plans against me. You heard about his great potential and I have doubt about his defeat."

Hearing Sugriv's narration and concern, Lakshaman laughed and spoke to him, "In your opinion, which act would testify that Ram would kill Vali."

Sugriv showed seven tall and huge *sal* trees and mentioned, "Vali can shake each of them so vigorously that they can become leafless. Previously he had pierced each of them several times. Ram, you have now to decide how you would be able to kill him. I am scared of his strength and therefore, I never go beyond this *rishyamuk*. I haven't seen your performances, and therefore, I may be talking like an ignorant. My intention is never to show you inferior to Vali, but make you fully aware of his great strength. I would prefer that Ram should try to hurl the skeleton of Dundhubhi with his toe at least two hundred bows length away."

Laughing, Ram assured Sugriv again, "My friend, my shaft will itself demonstrate my strength. I need not talk about that."

However to generate confidence in him, using his toe, he hurled the bone skeleton ten *yojan* away. Seeing this, Sugriv mentioned, "Vali was tired when he threw this dead body after killing the demon, and it was heavy also because it was fresh and wet with blood and flesh. Now it has become much lighter for it has gone dry, and only bones are remaining. There is a lot of difference between then and now. I am still doubtful of his strength. If you try on these *sal* trees my doubts might be cleared."

#### **4-12 Sugriv challenged Vali (42 / 558)**

Ram took out one shaft and loading on his bow charged that over the *sal* trees. The shaft piercing through all the seven trees went forward tearing the hills and netherworld and returned back safely to Ram.

Sugriv became glad to see his potential and became confident that Vali would be easily killed by him. He praised Ram, "No one in this creation would be able to face you, neither Mahendra, nor Varun. Vali is insignificant before your capability. I am sure he is now finished."

Ram took him immediately to Kishkindha. Hearing his roaring before his palace, Vali rushed out, and both were engaged in fierce wrestling. Ram stood hiding behind a tree with a shaft and bow in his hand. Both the brothers were so identical, that Ram couldn't decide, and he didn't charge his arrow. Scared of losing his life, Sugriv lastly ran away and entered the Matang *van*. Vali chased him, but he couldn't enter the prohibited forest for fear of curse of the sage.

Ram and Lakshaman came searching Sugriv in that forest. Sugriv critically spoke to Ram, "If you didn't want to kill him, why did you throw me in that death trap." Ram tried to convince him as to why he couldn't kill Vali, "Both of you are so identical that I couldn't

differentiate you from Vali, and therefore for fear of committing a mistake, I didn't charge the deadly arrow."

He asked Lakshaman to put a garland around his neck so that he could be differentiated from Vali. Lakshaman uprooted *gajpushpi* creeper and put that around Sugriv's neck for proper identification. Finally they moved to Kishkindha again.

#### **4-13 Saptajan ashram** (seven sages' hermitage 30/ 588)

While moving towards Kishkindha, Sugriv was ahead of all. Ram followed him, and Lakshaman was behind Ram. In the rear Hanuman, Nal, Neel, and Tar (तार chief of monkeys army) were moving following Lakshaman. On way Ram observed several ponds having several kinds of fragrant flowers. Birds and animals had enhanced the surrounding of dense rows of trees and lush green grass fields.

Ram spotted one attractive place which had several rows of impregnable trees encircled by banana plants. On enquiry from Sugriv, he learnt, "The entire large area is an *ashram* earlier graced by seven sages who had meditated at this place for seven hundred years. They used to maintain head down, and sustained their life on air only. They had departed bodily to heaven. Still we hear musical and dance tunes coming from inside. Evening sky witnesses the oblation smoke over the tree lines. No one can enter this zone, and if someone tried, he never returned. This place is called *saptajan ashram*."

Sugriv advised him to offer respect to those sages from outside which always fetch auspiciousness. Ram and Lakshaman offered their respect with folded hands from outside.

Moving ahead they reached Kishkindha.

#### **4-14 Sugriv threatened Vali (22 / 610)**

Arriving at Kishkindha, those accompanying Sugriv occupied hiding places behind trees of larger girth. Ram spoke to Sugriv, "You need to hurl challenge to Vali. He had earlier been victorious, and he never tolerates someone's threat. Hearing your voice, he will come out. You have seen, how using a single arrow seven huge *sal* trees were threaded. Similarly, today single arrow will cause Vali to mortally lie down on ground. The distinctive *gajapushpi* garland around your neck would differentiate Vali from you. " Encouraged by Ram, Sugriv produced a deafening roar driving birds and animals away from that zone.

#### **4-15 Tara's noble advice ( 31 / 641)**

When Vali stormed out to quell Sugriv's lion-roar, Tara followed her and interfering on his way submitted, "Kindly contain you rage. Earlier also Sugriv threatened you, but being thrashed by you he took shelter in Matang *van*. Again his quick come back threatening you has made me anxious. The other day, Angad was in the forest, and he

got updates from other monkeys which he told me. Two valiant humans, Ram and Lakshaman, said to be price of Ayodhya, in the family of *Ikshavaku*, have arrived here. Ram is said to be repository of noble qualities as the *Himalaya* is for precious metals. He is shelter of helpless, adherent to truth, and obedient to his father. Sugriv has won their favour. Be sympathetic to Sugriv. Crown him as prince, who had always served you with sincerity. He is your loving and obedient brother. Discard your enmity against him. I hardly find such a complying brother like Sugriv in this world.

#### 4-16 Vali grounded (39 / 680)

Vali didn't heed to Tara, and spoke to her, "How could I tolerate the lion-like threatening roar to me? Showing back to enemy in battlefield has never been my way of life. I can't allow someone threatening me. Righteous Ram won't commit any sin. I understand your emotion to me. You need to get back with other women. I see you closely coming with me. Please don't do this. I will not allow Sugriv roaring like this. I would only thrash him, and would never kill him. I am sure under my impulsive pounding, Sugriv would soon take to heels. I stand obliged to you for enlightening me on mental level."

Tara was an enlightened and knowledgeable woman. With an aim to earn his victory in the combat, she recited auspicious *swasti mantr* (4-16-12) giving a round of her husband, Vali. When Tara entered inner palace, Vali rushed out of the city like an angry snake hissing deeply. He located Sugriv tight with his loin cloth. Vali also firmly secured his loin cloth, and with a clenched fist plunged over Sugriv. They exchanged pounding over each other. Due to Vali's punch, Sugriv began bleeding through his mouth. Both picked up fierce fighting. Sugriv uprooting a sal tree bounced over Vali. This injured Vali and he was shaken like a wave surfing boat, but they continued the combat of pounding each other. Sugriv felt to be weaker than Vali, and looked around seeking help. Sensing Sugriv's losing heart, Ram charged his deadly shaft over Vali.

Hurt by Ram's arrow, Vali fell on ground, and was bathed in his own blood. He looked like the grounded symbolic flag, *indr-dhwaj of ashwin purnima* (full moon night).

#### 4-17 Critical Vali (54 / 734)

When Vali fell flat on ground, and was about to depart, Ram and Lakshaman came to him. As soon as they offered their respect to him, Vali spoke, "My wife Tara had dissuaded me in coming to fight today. I assured her Ram is righteous and with no fault of mine he would never act against me. You proved me wrong. Your reputation of being truthful and fair has been tarnished by this act of killing me from a hiding. The royal qualities of patience, pardon, mercy, righteousness and valiance appear to be a façade in you. You appear like an ascetic but your deeds are opposite in nature. I compare you with that deceptive well which is kept covered with grass and straw stems. Among five nailed creatures, the skin and flesh of monkey are untouchable. If you killed me to seek favour of Sugriv for locating your wife Sita, you could have asked me. By this time, I would have brought not only Sita before you, but I would have produced Ravan tied in a rope before you. Even if Sita would have been in deep sea, I would have retrieved her

as *bhagwan haygreev* (4-17-51) had recovered scriptures from the demons. If you have answers to my allegations, please come forward.”

#### 4-18 Apologetic Vali (66 / 800)

Ram reminded Vali, “Ikshavaku house is the ruler of this earth. Bharat is the present king, and we are his representative. We have authority to punish the violators of code of conduct established by age old scriptures. I understand, you are a sinner who banished his brother and grabbed his wife. Your lustful association with Ruma (wife of Sugriv) is sheer violation of *dharma*. Elder brother, teacher and father are to be respected alike. The younger brother, son and able disciple command equal affection. The wife of younger brother is like daughter in law and you have willfully violated this provision of scripture. Having punished you, I didn’t violate our code of conduct. The primordial among humans, Manu (4-18-30) has set forth that if a king allows the citizens to indulge in sinful activities, the king shall have to bear the brunt of the misdeeds of the citizen. Under the influence of unfounded anger you denounced me, but I don’t agree to your blame and I am not at fault at all.”

Hearing the explanation of Ram, Vali apologized for his misconception and outrageous allegations against him. He submitted, “After my departure, I pray you to protect my son, Angad and my wife Tara.” Ram assured him, “Angad would continue receiving similar treatment and affection as you had been providing to him. Tara would enjoy safe royal status.”

Vali was convinced of his assurances, and he submitted his sincere prayer to please Ram.

#### 4-19 Arrival of Angad and Tara (28 / 828)

Vali was lying unconscious. Tara heard about his end by Ram’s arrow. Taking Angad with her she came out of the cave city. On way she met the panicked monkeys who asked her to get back to Kishkindha and crown Angad as the king. They expressed their apprehension of reprisals from the group of Sugriv supporters monkeys. Tara ignored their advice, “When my husband is no more, neither son, nor state is of any use to me.” She ran towards the combat site, and saw Vali in a pitiable departing condition. She saw Ram standing taking support of his bow. By his side, Lakshaman and Sugriv were present. Seeing Tara and Angad rushing straight to unconscious Vali, Sugriv got greatly grieved.

#### 4-20 Wailing Tara (26 / 854)

She reminded Vali of his great strength, who never cared for mighty elephants and mountains, “How did he today lie down over ground? Have you created a city like Kishkindha in heaven, that you are going there? I have been enjoying several scenic places with you, now who will take me to those places. I tried to stop you today but you didn’t heed my words. It is the consequence of banishing Sugriv out of Kishkindha that you lost your life.”

Looking towards Ram she blamed him for killing Vali without any valid reason. She looked to Sugriv and spoke, "You attained what you wanted. Your enemy is now no more. You will enjoy the royal state as well as your wife Ruma."

She again turned towards Vali, "Your loveliest wife Tara is orphan today. Your several dear wives have lost their dear master." Hearing her lamentation, the other wives of Vali, held Angad, and began crying bitterly.

Tara reminded Vali about his dear son Angad. She also begged for pardon if she had committed any mistake unknowingly.

#### **4-21 Hanuman consoled Tara (16 / 870)**

Looking her deeply immersed in grief and lying over ground, Hanuman consoled Tara, "This life is the consequence of our own deeds. Being a learned and knowledgeable woman, you should not lament like an ordinary being. It is now time to crown Angad, and you are the head mistress of the entire kingdom. Vali being the righteous and upright king had now reached heaven. There should be no lamentation for him."

Tara spoke addressing Hanuman, "Mother doesn't have any role in crowning. I am no longer a mistress of this kingdom. When I compare thousands of Angad, with that of immolating myself with my husband, I find the latter one more beneficial. Sugriv being the uncle of Angad, is authorized for all upcoming events. For me, nothing would be more beneficial than follow my husband in other world."

#### **4-22 Vali's ultimate departure (32 / 902)**

Slowly Vali's vital organs were withdrawing. He saw Sugriv and beckoning him closer he spoke, "My brother ! It was due to my some past misdeed that I grew malignant to you. We lost the warmth of brotherhood. I was at fault, and I pray you to forget my misdeeds. See, how grieved Angad is !, he is lying unconscious over ground. Take care of him, in my absence. He looks like a child, but he is dependable and skilful. He will kill the demons and will demonstrate his excellence in the battle field. Tara, daughter of Sushen, is very wise, and her fine analysis of any issue is reliable. On account of her keen observations of the bad omens, she has the knack of forewarning in advance against occurrences of adverse events. She will always give you good advice."

Vali then offered Sugriv his golden celestial necklace, "The golden chain around my neck is celestial, and before I die, I offer it to you which will fetch auspiciousness to your life. Once I die, and if it remains on my body, it will lose its auspiciousness." Sugriv accepted that chain offered by Vali, and he put that around his neck.

Vali addressed Angad, who stood near him, "Always be loyal and faithful to Sugriv. Never behave willfully and win his confidence. Your own performance will win status for you", and with these last words, Vali departed for another world.

Seeing him dead, wail and cry rented the air. His close associates monkeys were immersed in grief and mentioned, "Once you fought, Golabh, gandharv continuously for fifteen years without any break in day or night. In the sixteenth year you killed Golabh. How surprising, and unbelievable is this that a person of such a mighty potential would leave us permanently."

Tara embracing the dead body of Vali, fell unconscious on ground.

#### **4-23 Lamenting Tara (30 / 932)**

Tara lamented loudly, "You have embraced ground such that it is now dearer to you than me. It is the same ground, over which you caused several warriors to sleep for ever, and now today you have also attained the same state. One should not be married to a mighty king, as because of that I have prematurely been made widow. The arrow in your chest prevents me from embracing you closely."

Neel came forward and took out that deadly shaft out of Vali's body. This caused further oozing out of blood from the wound, and soaked the ground deep red, as if he was lying on a mosaic sheet over his bed.

Tara, holding Angad, asked him to offer last salutation to his father. When Angad offered his respect salute in his feet, Tara wailed, "Why you don't bless your son today !"

#### **4-24 Grieved Sugriv (44 / 976)**

When Sugriv saw Tara lamenting bitterly for Vali, he also got immersed in deep grieve. Coming closer to Ram, he spoke, "I am a sinner that I caused the end of my brother. When in combat, I became unconscious by one his punches, he asked me to "*go away, I won't kill you*", such great was he, and I for my selfish reasons got him killed. When Indr (the chief of gods) killed *Vritrasur*, he had to do penance to get rid of the sin of killing a Brahmin. His sin was, thereafter, shared by earth, water, tree, and river. I don't see any one who could share my sin for causing end of my own brother. Instead of becoming king of Kishkindha, now I feel to rise to his pyre, and end my life with him. I assure you that in my absence, my other associates would act sincerely to locate Sita."

Ram was quiet, and after a while he moved towards Tara, who was lying embracing Vali on ground. Seeing him coming closer, others took Tara away from Vali. When Tara saw Ram, getting closer to him, she spoke, "You are righteous, truthful and shelter of the helpless. In absence of my husband I am helpless, and I pray you to kill me using the same arrow which was used to kill Vali."

Ram advised her, "You being wife of a valiant warrior, should not lament like this. Get above this grief. This creation has been created to face all the eventualities. No one can escape this. I advise you to gird up your strength and face the situation valiantly. Your son is bound to become the crown prince and you should bless him."

When Ram spoke thus, she became quiet, and stopped lamenting any more.



#### 4-25 Last rites of Vali (54 / 1030)

Ram was equally grieved as Sugriv, Angad and Tara. However, he moved towards them and asked them, "Lamenting over the departed soul do no good to that soul. You need to understand that everything in this creation is under strict control of time. The happenings of the time are linked with the destiny. Wailing and grieving will not change the destiny. The inevitable can't be deferred."

Lakshaman came forward and advised Sugriv, "Make quick preparations for the last rites of Vali. Send Angad to collect himself the essential items, viz, cloths, ghee, flowers, sandal wood etc."

While Sugriv engaged Angad for collecting the necessary items for rites, Lakshaman directed Tar to arrange a palanquin and able monkey carriers to carry the Vali's body to the cremation ground. Tar immediately came with palanquin from Kishkindha which was decorate with all royal insignias. Sugriv and Angad took the dead body of Vali to palanquin and that was then carried by mighty monkeys to the river bank. Tara again wept bitterly taking Vali's head in her lap. Other wives of Vali were weeping by the side of Tara.

The pyre was made ready on the river's bank. Angad and Sugriv laid the body over the pyre. Angad performed the last rite of offering fire after giving rounds to the pyre. The last rite was performed and thereafter they offered water tribute in the river, in respect of the departed soul.

#### 4-26 Crowning of Sugriv and Angad (42 / 1072)

Hanuman approached Ram and submitted, "With your blessings, Sugriv has been restored to regal inheritance. As prescribed in the scriptures, necessary items including water mixed with suitable herbs have been obtained. I seek your permission to complete his coronation, and request you to grace the crowning occasion at Kishkindha." Ram told him, "Under father's words, I can't enter any city or village before completion of my assigned fourteen years terms of the forest life."

Ram advised Sugriv, "Angad is an able person, and son of your elder brother. He should also be crowned as successor prince of the state. Both the coronations should be organized simultaneously. The first month of rainy season, *shravan* has commenced, and it is first of the four consecutive months of the traditional<sup>2</sup> rest and sleeping period of the year for the gods and sages during rains. During these months, I would stay on this hill top with Lakshaman. This place is congenial for living. Water, fresh air and lotus

<sup>2</sup> Chaturmas चतुर्मास (beginning from Vishnu shayani विष्णु शयनी (asharah shukla dwadsi आपाढ़ शुक्ल द्वादशी) to Vishnu utthan विष्णु उत्थान (kartik shukla dwadshi कार्तिक शुक्ल द्वादशी).

flowers are adequately available here. You should make all preparatory arrangements for end of Ravan in the month of *Kartik*, the fourth and last month of gods rest."

With the permission of Ram, Sugriv entered the cave city Kishkindha. He was surrounded by a large gathering of mighty monkeys. On his entering the cave city, he was accorded warm welcome by the residents. As mark of respect to the king, the citizens and courtiers bowed to the feet of Sugriv. Thereafter he was taken for coronation and treated with large umbrella, *chavar*, seeds, gems, herbs, locks of lactation trees, white flowers, white cloths, fragrant water, scented garlands, sandal, rice, gold, honey, ghee, curd, tiger skin, and other decorative materials to enhance the grandeur. Sixteen teen aged girls were holding the coronation materials. Able Brahmins were duly respected and treated before commencing the coronation. The fire quarter was made ready for offering oblation. *Kush* (कुश sacred grass) was spread around the fire quarter. After igniting the sacrificial fire, oblations were offered with scriptural procedures.

Sacred water from various rivers, sacred places, and seven oceans were kept ready in golden pots. The respectable personalities, viz., Gaj, Gavaksh, Gavay, Sharabh, Gandhmadan, Maind, Dwid, Hanuman and Jambvan showered sacred water over Sugriv who was occupying a special golden throne. On completion of his enthronement, sky rented with the sound of glory of his name.

As commanded by Ram, Sugriv immediately conducted the crowning of Angad as the successor prince. The citizen showered all praise over Sugriv for this auspicious work of crowning of Angad as prince.

#### 4-27 Ram at *Prasravan* mount (48 / 1120)

The place where Ram and Lakshaman stayed was called *prasravan* mount. While staying there, Ram made a graphic description of the natural scene, "Our cave opens in south west (*nairat* नैरत कोण ) and is sloping down in north-east ( ईशान कोण ). In front of entry the large is covered with plain and leveled hard black stone. River (*tungbhadra*) flows not far from here. This river flows eastward as if *jahnavi* (*ganga*) flows at *trikut* ( *himalaya* ). All sorts of precious trees *arjun*, *chandan*, *tilak*, *sal*, *tamal*, *atimuktak*, *padmak*, *saral* and *shok* are present here. The river bank has trees: *jalabenth*, *timid*, *bakul*, *ketak*, *hithal*, *tinish*, *neep*, *sthalbenth*, and *krutmal* as if a bride is dressed up fully. The echoing melodious voice of birds, peacock and cuckoo is heard in the mountains. We also hear the victorious sound from the monkeys of Kishkindha. The water birds: royal swan and saras enhance the grandeur of flowing river (*tungbhadra*). This river bed being sludge free is known as for inhabiting several sages on its bank."

Although there was no dearth of fruits, roots, flowers and other natural sceneries, Ram stayed in apathetic state with tearful eyes. Seeing him sorrowful,

Lakshaman once encouraged him, “Being a great valiant person, why are you seen always in grip of grieve. Grieving mind is neither auspicious, nor conducive to creativity. It would rather make you idle with a detraction from the main objective of retrieving Sita. Compared to your immense capacity of eliminating the entire creation in a trice, the task of handling a small fry like Ravan is insignificant. Let us wait for the end of this rainy period, and in the *sharad*<sup>3</sup> (शरद माह आश्विन कार्तिक ) months with due help of Sugriv we would eliminate Ravan forever.”

Ram responded with affirmative assurance, “I would no longer lament, and would keep my valiance to the fore.”

#### 4-28 Period of rains (66 / 1186)

The onset of the period of rains was so impressive that Ram cited various matching examples, “(i) The evening sky in the rainy season is reddish in the centre with white peripheral border which is like red paste of sandal over the forehead of the clouds. (ii) Summer hot earth is soaked with rains as if lamenting Sita has tears over her hot face due to separation from me. (iii) The rains appear like sacred threads, and clouds like body of the young disciples whose who have taken position over mountains to pursue their study of vedic scriptures. (iv) *Arjun* trees surrounded by fragrant *kevda* bushes, with the splashes of rains and showers, appear like Sugriv who is being consecrated with sacred water during crowning ceremony. (v) The flashes of lightening appear like whip over the clouds who produce terrible sounds of thunder. (vi) The curving flashes of lightening look like tossing Sita in the lap of abductor Ravan. (vi) With the cool and pleasant environment, the earth has become dust free. (vii) The damaged routes where chariots can’t move, have paused the royal expeditions. (vii) Royal swans have departed to *mansarovar*. (ix) The hilly rivers running full, red with mud mixed water carrying flowers of *kadamb*, produce matching sound to that of melodious voice of dancing peacocks. (x) The cool breeze is so lovely that one is tempted to taste in the cup of the palms (like water). (xi) Ripe rose berries descend over ground like flying black bees; the ripe mangos fallen from the trees are in abundance to satisfy all hunger. (xii) The rivers approach to sea, as if in the initial days of the rainy period the slumber appears to be slowly moving to supreme *keshava* (4-28-25 निद्रा शनैः केशवमभ्युपैति). (xii) The forest is celebrating the musical concert in the company of humming bees, freaking frogs, and drumming clouds. (xiii) The beauty of the forest is enhanced by unbalanced *gajendr*

<sup>3</sup> 1. वर्षा माह श्रावण भाद्रपद 2 शरद माह आश्विन कार्तिक 3 हेमंत माह मार्गशीर्ष पौष 4 शिशिर माह माघ फाल्गुन 5 वसंत माह चैत्र वैशाख 6 ग्रीष्म माह ज्येष्ठ

(elephants), glad *gavendr* (bulls), mighty *mrigendr* (lion), charming *nagendr* (mountains), quiet *narendr* (kings), and enjoying *surendr* (Indr) (4-28-43). (xiv) The showers of rain is like consecrating sacred water (on royal crowning occasion) being poured by clouds over the mountains. (xv) The rain drops resemble the pearls coming down from the body of celestial dancers who have been molested by their favourite gods. (xvi) The coming of *bhadra pad* month, has offered opportunities to Brahmins to learn recitation of *sam ved*.

Recalling Ayodhya Ram mentioned, "Bharat must have collected all the materials for four months by the *purnima* (full moon day) of *asharah आषाढ़* . Saryu must have been in high flood, as if the teeming people is bidding farewell to me."

He again begins counting the ending days of rainy period, so that Sita could be retrieved at the earliest, "In absence of Sita I am like those rivers whose banks have been eroded in floods. Sugriv has been restored to his royal comforts after a long time, and therefore he must be given time to satisfy himself. Thereafter, he would definitely take up my task of finding Sita."

Hearing this statement of Ram, Lakshaman applauded him for demonstrating his patience during the period of rains.

#### 4-29 Neel to gather monkeys (33 / 1219)

Hanuman observed, "The rainy months are over. The sky is clear, and in the moon lit night it appears as if it is anointed with sandal paste. Sugriv is engrossed in enjoying the royal luxuries. He is not seen monitoring the activities of ministers, and without his review noble ministers are honestly executing their functions. He is found to be more in lonely company of women. It appears he is not vigilant to the words he had given to Ram."

Thinking thus, Hanuman went to Sugriv, and reminded him politely, "You are capable of helping the strangers. Ram had completed the tough task of killing Vali for the benefit of his friend. Before the time is up, and we proved delaying his mission of locating Sita, you must take proper initiatives. The hundreds of millions of monkeys are at your beck call. They need to be driven in all quarters to locate Sita either on earth or in sky. "

Welcoming Hanuman's initiative, Sugriv asked Neel to take command of collecting the monkeys from all quarters. He commanded, "Get them all here within fifteen days. Take assistance of Angad, and counsel of elder and respected personalities, act immediately. If someone is reporting after fifteen days, he would be killed without any mercy." Saying thus, he entered his inner palace.

#### 4-30 *Sharad* months and Lakshaman to Sugriv (85 / 1304)

The sky of post rainy period had become clear. The moon lit night was brighter and had comforting effects. Ram thought of Sita, "During the period of *sharad*, when previously we were together, she used to repeat exactly in same melodious tone the call of *saras* birds. She used to wake up hearing the chirping of *kalhans*, I wonder how would be she now? Alas, I move around seeing varieties of rivers, ponds, groves, forests and hills but in her absence I am not able to derive any pleasure from them."

This way Ram lamented on the state of plight of Sita. Lakshaman had gone to fetch fruits and flowers. On coming back when he saw the pitiable grieved state of mind of Ram, he expressed to Ram about his own anxiety, "Your this state of grief for Sita, is not appreciable. You need to concentrate on the final objective and its attainment, instead of getting lost in grief of separation. Sita is a glowing flame, and any other person trying to get closer to her is bound to be burnt to ashes."

Ram got greatly encouraged by his statement, and he further mentioned, "The dark black clouds are absent. The breeze carrying the fragrance of *arjun* and *kutaj* has become placid and quiet. We no longer hear the sound of springs, clouds, elephants and peacocks. The sun has begun drying up the mud, and the earth is now producing dust. The bulls surrounded by cows have got smeared with dust. The absence of clouds has caused peacocks to become quiet, and discarding their colourful wings on the river banks, they are retracting in oblivion as if they had been reprimanded by *sarad* (autumn) active *saras* birds. Since the mud is gone, the river water has become clear, and to enjoy this, scores of swans, *saras* (*सारस*), and cows have descended on the banks. The snakes who were forced inside holes during rains, are now coming out hungry. The night in *sharad* appears like a bride draped in white sari of moon light. Her brilliant face is made by moon, and stars form her twinkling eyes. The *saras* birds, after feeding upon the paddy corns, fly in the sky, as if garlands are sustained in air. The presence of swans and lotuses appear like jewels and apparels of the lakes."

Quoting various evidences of end of rainy period, Ram advised Lakshaman to go to Kishkindha and remind Sugriv of his commitments, "If he is lost in royal luxuries and lust I would send him to the death world where Vali was dispatched. Vali has gone there alone but this time I would send Sugriv with all his kith and kin. So far there is no evidence of his initiatives to locate Sita as committed by him earlier."

#### 4-31 Lakshaman on way to Kishkindha ( 51 / 1355)

Lakshaman was full with wrath, and he mentioned, "Sugriv had established friendship in presence of fire god, and if he fails to meet the commitment he had made, his state and wealth would soon be destroyed. He appears to have forgotten our objective to which he had given words. I would now kill him, and make Angald the king of Kishkindha who will carry out the searching mission of Sita."

Ram tried to assuage his anger, "It is not proper to immediately lose temper on Sugriv. With soft words he needs to be reminded that the period to find Sita has come to an end, and we haven't heard any of your initiatives in this regard."

Lakshaman stormed towards Kishkindha and on his way he didn't care about the trees or rock masses. When he arrived close to the cave city, the elephant like monkeys who were moving around stood with trees and stones in their hands. Lakshaman became very angry and his face became so terrifying that monkeys began running away. Some monkeys informed Sugriv about his anger who stood near the city, but Sugriv lost in liquor influence couldn't heed to their words.

The monkeys on guard of the city had come out equipped with trees and heavy rock masses. They saw Lakshaman in a state of extreme wrath who appeared to them as five hooded angry and mighty serpent (4-31-30) , and he was fiercely hissing hot air. In the meanwhile scared Angad moved close to him, whom Lakshaman asked, "My son, Angad, convey to Sugriv that Lakshaman brother of Ram has arrived and he wants to see you."

Going inside the palace Angad touched the feet of Sugriv, Tara and Ruma, and mentioned to Sugriv, "Valiant son of Sumirta, Lakshaman has arrived." Sugriv was in deep slumber because of his lusty life and couldn't hear Angad's words.

Trying to please Lakshaman, other monkeys created mildly respectful and joyful sound, but he remained unimpressed and continued in wrath. Two ministers, Plaskh and Prabhaw, submitted to Sugriv, "Ram and Lakshman have demonstrated their righteousness and truthfulness. With their assistance you have been restored to royal status. One of them, Lakshaman have arrived here, and his angry mood has caused panic among the monkeys. Kindly move to him respectfully with your kith and kin, and bowing head over his feet try to calm him down."

#### **4-32 Hanuman counseled Sugriv (22 / 1377)**

Coming to learn about anger of Lakshaman, Sugriv stood up and spoke, "Neither I have committed any fault nor spoken any words against Lakshaman. I am not able to comprehend, as to what caused him so angry. I guess, some of my adversaries must have misguided him. I am not ever capable of paying back their obligation to me."

Hanuman present among ministers mentioned, "Ram has demonstrated his affection to you by sending his younger brother. You have slipped from your commitment to commence the finding out mission of Sita. The clarity of water in river, enhanced brightness of the day and night apparently suggest the advent of *sharad* (autumn). Lost in royal luxuries you didn't care about your commitments. I have frankly submitted this for your benefits. I would advise you to go with your entire family to him, and offer your respects in his feet. He may calm down. Even if he uses a few harsh words, never mind about that."

#### 4-33 Tara calmed down Lakshaman (66 / 1443)

Angad invited Lakshaman inside to Kishkindha. Moving ahead he saw the cave city of Kishkindha. It had well laid out plan, having provision of ponds, lakes and groves of fruit bearing trees. Monkeys had seen his anger, and therefore instead of surrounding him, they moved isolated and scattered. On the main street, Lakshaman saw the well decorated palace of Angad. On the same street was situated the residences of Maind, Dwid, Gavay, Gavaksh, Gaj, Sharabh, Vidyunmali, Sampati, Suryaksh, Hanuman, Virbahu, Subahu, Nal, Kumud, Sushen, Tar, Jambvan, Dadhimukh, Neel, Supatal and Sunetra. All the isolated mansions were white and decorated with flowers. The gates of these mansions had covering of gold and gems.

Away was the fort of Sugriv, isolated by high ramparts. Being guarded heavily by mighty monkeys, it has impregnable and difficult access. The celestial trees, laden with fruits and flowers, gifted by Indr had enhanced the grandeur of the king Sugriv's palace. Crossing seven exterior gates, Lakshaman entered the inner palace. He saw several attractive sets of seats and couches which had been decorated with gems and precious metals. Soon he heard the echo of melodious and soft songs accompanied on the tunes of violin. Beautiful and young women, seen inside, indicated the grandeur of the palace. The attendants were found active and well dressed.

The sound of the anklets coming out from the movement of the palace women, could initially make Lakshaman, a little shy. Reminded by his main purpose of visit, finding no evidence of initiative on his mission, again he grew angry, and stretched the string of his bow making loud and terrifying sound. He stood alone at a distance.

Scared by the sound of his bow, Sugriv got up, and anxiety gripped him severely. He requested Tara to go and find out the reason of his anger. Sure, we appear to have committed some mistake.

Tara came out, and seeing her Lakshaman was a little calmed down. Tara respectfully mentioned, "Who would dare to displease you? Who would dare violate your command? What has caused such a great anger?" Hearing Tara's wise full submission, Lakshaman spoke, "Sugriv spend four months without any initiative. He was fully lost in the palace lust and luxuries, ignoring our main purpose of friendship. There are two types of friends: first, who is interested in the prosperity of the friend, and the second, who is established in *dharma* and truth. I find the absence of both in Sugriv."

Tara again submitted politely, "It is a fact that he was in the grip of lust and intoxication. The elders and wise ones, never disown the closer ones. You are much superior to him and you should pardon him for his fault. Subordinates should not be subjected to such anger. Although he was lost in the sensual comforts, he had issued command and as a result, scores of monkeys have gathered from several quarters. These monkeys are capable of changing forms, industrious and strong."

Tara praised his sense of modesty and decorum that seeing women in the palace he didn't move inside and stood outside. She ushered him inside the Sugriv's royal chamber where Sugriv had occupied the throne bedecked with gold and gems. He was surrounded by beautiful women, and when first glance of Lakshaman fell on him, he was seen embracing his wife Ruma closely.

#### 4-34 Sugriv rose to Lakshaman (19 / 1462)

Lakshaman entered the chamber of Sugriv, and seeing his arrival, Sugriv jumped out of his throne. Coming to Lakshaman he stood with folded hands and his wife Ruma and other women also followed him.

Lakshaman expressed his outburst, "Sugriv, do you know the outcome of forgetting some one's obligation? Your purpose has been served and very easily you forgot the commitment you made to such a friend who had been true to his words. You must be aware, Brahma once recited one *sholk* conveying that there is solution of seeking liberation against the sin committed by killing a cow, taking liquor, indulging in a theft, and breaking the penance, but there is no way out of emancipation of a person who ignores the obligation and turns ungrateful. You should not forget that your friend who used an arrow to send Vali to the other world is shorn of that arrow. Soon, following the same route you would also join Vali."

#### 4-35 Tara pacified Lakshaman (23 / 1485)

Tara came forward and pacifying Lakshaman spoke, "Sugriv is the king, and such harsh words are humiliating for the king. He is in fact, neither ungrateful, nor liar, nor cruel, nor cunning, nor idiot. For long time he was driven out of the royal luxuries, and when that got restored to him, he become a captive of the sensual and other physical pleasures. That has created an impression about his negligence of the sacred work of Ram. However, such indulgence is not unnatural. In this respect, the example of Vishwamitr is quite instructive. One, he was trapped in the sensual pleasure of Ghritachi (Menaka), one of the celestial dancers, and lost his tab on time. Ten years passed as if one day had passed. Person like Vishwamitr can be diverted for sensual enjoyment, what to talk of the lesser being, i.e., a monkey like Sugriv."

She continued, "For a person of your superiority, such treatment of the king is not appreciable. I am sure, for the work of Ram, he would never hesitate sacrificing me, Ruma and his kingdom of Kishkindha. He would definitely kill those devil demons and bring back Sita to Ram as if *rohini* (4-35-14) is brought closer to moon. I have learnt from the mouth of Vali, that one hundred crore<sup>4</sup>, thirty six *ayut*<sup>5</sup>, thirty six thousand, and thirty

<sup>4</sup> *Crore* करोड़ कोटि is ten million.

<sup>5</sup> *Ayut* is ten thousand. The Indian ancient counting system is : ek (one), dash (ten), shat (hundred), sahasr (thousand), ayut (ten thousand), laksh (lakh – hundred thousand), pryt (ten lakh, or million), koti (crore – one hundred lakh or ten million), arbud (ten crore, or one hundred million), abj (arab, one thousand million or one billion), kharv (ten arab, or ten billion), mahapadm (ten *kharv*, or hundred billion), *shanku* (neel, or thousand billion or trillion), jaladhi (ten *neel*, or ten trillion).



six hundred demons live in Lanka. They can assume any form in disguise and are deceptive. Before killing Ravan, it appears a necessity to kill those demons. For such a colossal task, the help of Sugriv is essential. He has already sent for millions of monkeys from all quarters, and today is the last day assigned to them to gather. Their number is expected to be one thousand crore bears, one hundred crore baboons, and several crores other monkeys. Seeing you enraged, and apprehending some mishap, we women of the palace have lost our peace of mind. Please calm down.”

#### 4-36 Apologetic Sugriv (20 / 1505)

Tara’s initiative pleased Lakshaman and he discarded his anger. Sugriv felt fearless, and coming forward he spoke to him, “My kingdom, fame and royal magnificence had been redeemed by Ram. His one arrow not only pierced through seven trees but that tore apart several mountains, went deep into netherworld and returned back to him. His this potential is unparallel and he hardly needs any help from anybody. He is alone capable to kill all the demons and retrieve Sita. I would only be a small fry following his footsteps. Being his servant, whatever lapses have occurred due to me, I beg to be pardoned. There is no servant who never committed any mistake.”

Lakshaman was pleased with this statement of Sugriv. Praising him for his humility and politeness he requested him, “You and Ram are great who exercise restrain over anger. Come with me to Ram. He keeps grieving remembering Sita. You need to console him.”

#### 4-37 Monkeys sent for again (37 / 1542)

Before leaving with Lakshaman, Sugriv spoke to Hanuman, “Let us send fast and able monkeys to send for monkeys from five main mountain zones of *mahendr*, *himvan*, *vindhya*, *Kailas*, and *mandrachal*. Monkeys staying at places like, western coast, the sun’s bastion of *udayachal* and *astachal*, in the forest near *padmachal*, *anjan*<sup>6</sup> mountain, *meru*<sup>7</sup> mountain, *dhumr*<sup>8</sup> and *maharun*<sup>9</sup> mountain need to be called by sending special messengers. Monkeys in all the forests, and those taking shelter in the zone of fragrant hermitages of sages also have to be contacted and invited to be present immediately.”

He also asked to send reminder to those who had been invited earlier. Those who fail to turn up within ten days fatal punishment need to be imposed against them.

As advised Hanuman sent such messengers who were capable of taking sky routes. Those messengers meeting the monkeys in various regions of earth inspired them to come immediately at Kishkindha for special mission of Ram.

Monkeys began arriving at Kishkindha from all quarters in huge numbers, viz., (i) three crore of collyrium complexion from *kajal giri*, (ii) ten crore of golden complexion from *astachal* (setting sun mountain), (iii) one thousand crore of white complexion (as of

<sup>6</sup> Monkeys complexion in this mountain are black and they look like elephants.

<sup>7</sup> Their complexion is bright golden.

<sup>8</sup> Monkeys habitual of taking *mariya madhu* (a sweet drink).

<sup>9</sup> Their complexion is reddish like rising sun.

mane of lion) from Kailas, (iv) one thousand thousand crore from the Himalayas, (v) one thousand crore of red complexion (resembling planet mars) from *vindhya*, (vi) innumerable monkeys from coastal and *tamal van* area who stayed on the coconut water. Their arrival was so impressive that even sun was not visible due to their presence in sky around Kishkindha.

Those messengers who were sent earlier (under the supervision<sup>10</sup> of Neel), while passing through the Himalayas, spotted a huge tree at the venue where *Shiv* once had performed *ygya*. Huge collection of *ygya* cereals and *ghee* were made on that occasion. Out of their oblation offered to fire, later grew trees of such varieties who bore delicious fruits. One who takes one fruit of those trees could stay for one month fully satisfied without any want of food. Those messengers collected huge quantities of those fruits and offered them in gift to Sugriv when they arrived at Kishkindha.

#### 4-38 Sugriv with Ram (34 / 1476)

Glad Sugriv on receiving the delicious gifts, praised the efforts of the messengers. Lakshaman, advised him to move out of Kishkindha. Sugriv asked the palace women and other monkeys to go inside. He asked royal palanquin to be brought and when that was made ready, he requested Lakshaman to mount that. He also mounted the same palanquin and it was carried to the place where Ram stayed. The palanquin was surrounded by hundreds of monkeys, and they moved sounding conch, drum and other royal instruments.

On arriving to Ram, Sugriv and Lakshaman came out of the palanquin and stood folded handed before Ram. Other monkeys also followed them. Ram saw Sugriv placing his head over his feet, and getting up he embraced him closely. Ram offered him a seat and spoke, "The king need to be alert to the balance of *arth* (wealth), *dharm* (righteousness), and *kam*. If only *kam* prevails, the royal inheritance is endangered. The king should discharge his duty promptly on time."

Sugriv politely submitted, "My inheritance is your blessings, for I was forced out of the royal possession. Thousand of monkey have arrived along with the messengers and several millions are arriving shortly. Those who are offspring of *gandharv*, and *kinnar* are capable of assuming any form according to their wishes, and they are well informed about the mountains, forests and oceans and all the territories on earth. They are about to arrive in multitude. The monkeys are mighty and skillful. Killing the demons, they would retrieve Sita at the earliest."

Such a confident statement of Sugriv made Ram very happy, and his appearance of a blooming blue lotus encouraged and excited all those present with him.

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<sup>10</sup> Refer sarg 4-29

#### 4-39 Arrival of monkeys (44 / 1520)

Ram praised Sugriv and mentioned, "Sita's abduction is self damaging exercise of Ravan. He would be killed as Indr had killed his arrogant and deceptive father-in-law, Pulom (father of Sachi)."

While Ram was talking to Sugriv, the surrounding became cloudy due to dust raised by the arrival of billions of monkeys. Some of them had complexion of the pinkish rising sun. Some were yellowish like pollen of louts, while others coming from *himachal* were white. Some of them had the appearance of a bright moon. Shatbali had arrived with ten *arab* (hundred billion), and father of Tara was accompanied by thousand crore (ten billion). Father of Hanuman, Keshari who had a complexion of yellow pollen of lotus, and face pink like rising sun, had arrived with several millions of monkeys. Baboons led by Gvaksh were ten *arab* (hundred billion) in number. Dhumra was seen with twenty *arab* (two hundred billion) bears. Panas army comprised of ten crore (thirty million) monkeys. Neel, having blue complexion of *kajjal* mountain, was surrounded by thirty million monkeys. Gavay of the golden complexion of Meru mount, had arrived with fifty million monkeys. Darimukh, a mighty monkey leader, arrived with hundred billion monkeys. Both the brothers, Dwid and Maind, were seen with hundred billion monkeys. Thirty million monkeys had accompanied Gaj. The king of bears, Jambvan stood near Sugriv and had bears' contingent of one hundred million. Stormy arrival of Ruman had brought ten billion monkeys. Subsequently, arrived Gandhamadan, who was accompanied by one trillion monkeys. Angad, mighty like his father, arrived with one thousand one trillion monkeys. Taar, having the brightness of stars, was seen arriving with fifty million monkeys. Learned Indrjanu, was seen with fifty five million monkeys. Rambha, looking of red complexion had come with eleven thousand one hundred monkeys. Durmukh was seen with twenty million monkeys. Hanuman had the gathering of one hundred billion monkeys looking like white tops of Kailas. Nal contingent comprised of ten billion, one thousand one hundred monkeys who were residents of Dhruv. Dadhimukh had contingent of one hundred billion, roaring monkeys. Sharad, Kumud, Vahni and Ranh and other group leaders had gathered innumerable monkeys from different forests and mountains.

The monkeys paid their due respect to Sugriv. Those who couldn't reach him, greeted him from a distance with a soft and vocal sounds. Sugriv acquainted Ram about the arrival places of monkeys who had surrounded him like cloud encircling the sun. They stayed at various suitable places in the near vicinity.

#### 4-40 Monkeys dispatched to the east (71 / 1591)

Sugriv sought the command of Ram for those monkeys. Ram, welcoming his initiative, mentioned, "First we have to find where does Ravan stay? We have to establish, whether Sita is alive. Once her whereabouts is discovered, we would plan future course of action. As regards the command to these monkeys, I fully rely your capability and strategy of action. You, therefore assign them the specific directions for their search.

Sugriv asked Vinat, to take one hundred thousand monkeys and go in the east to find out the location of Ravan and Sita. He enlisted the places, rivers, and territories to be hunted for Sita: (i) Rivers of *ganga*, *saryu*, *kaushaki*, *Yamuna*, *saraswati*, *sindhu*, *shonbhadra*, *kalmahi*; (ii) territories of brahmamal, videh, malav, kashi, kosai, magadh, pundradesh, ang; (iii) *yav dweep (java)*, *suvarndweep (Sumatra)*.

Sugriv asked to go all the places including those of *kirat* whose body's lower portion is like humans and the upper part is of a lion. They are eaters of raw and fresh fish.

He further mentioned, "Inhabiting demons and gods is *shishir* mountain range, which lies beyond Java. On the other side of sea, is the residence of *sidh* and *charan*. There flows river Shon, water red in colour, and in its surrounding are several dense forests and high mountains. Beyond the eastern territories lies the sea of sugarcane juice. This is infested with demons who drag the passersby and satisfy their hunger by killing them. Mighty serpents also stay there. Farther to that is *lohit* sea, beyond which is *shalmali dweep* having a large *kutshalmali* tree. Close to that tree is the residential palace of *Garud*, son of Vinita. That territory is inhabited by demons who every day in the morning attack over the rising sun. Soon they fall down due to the hot sun. Having fallen down in sea of liquor, they gain their life back. They keep on repeating their attack over sun every day in the morning. From there one can view *ksheer sagar* (sea of milk). There is mountain called *Rishabh* in the midst of *ksheer sagar* and there is a lake named *sudarshan* at the top of that mountain. The lake is full of silver white lotuses and to enjoy its fragrance scores of celestial dancers keep on visiting this lake. Beyond *ksheer sagar* is sea of palatable water which terrify the beings due to *vadvamukh*, always burning under the curse of the sage *Aurav*. About thirteen *yojan* beyond in the north of this sea is a golden mountain where divine serpent *anant* reside who has one thousand hoods. He is wrapped in blue cloths and has golden crowns. At the top of the mountain there flutters a three pronged flag carrying palm tree mark. At the bottom of the flag staff over the ground, there exists an oblation square. This mountain is *udaigiri* and has groves of trees of *sal*, *tal* and *tamal*. There is a peak called *saumanas* which is one *yojan* wide and ten *yojan* high. When *vaman bhagwan* stepped out to measure three steps of land, he put his first feet over *saumanas* and the second was placed on *meru*. When sun completes his orbit, he crosses the highest peak *saumanas*, and he becomes visible to all the inhabitants of *Jambudweep*. Over that peak are seen *balkhilya* sages, along with meditating *vaikhanas*. From one gets entry to earth coming from *brahmlok*. One who leaves earth for *brahmlok* also passes through this gateway. This gate way was the first creation of *brahma*, and therefore it is called *purv disha* (eastern direction, literally meaning, created earlier)."

Sugriv exhorted the monkeys to go searching Sita on all all places upto *udaigiri* for there is no visible place on earth beyond that. Even sun and moon don't light beyond that. The assignment of search should be completed in thirty days, failing which, mortal punishment would be implemented.

#### 4-41 Most trusted Team to the south (49 / 1640)

Angad was made the overall leader of the southern team and the important ones of the team were Neel (son of fire), Hanuman, Jambvan (son of Brahma), Suhotr, Sharai, Shargulm, Gaj, Gavaksh, Gavay, Vrishabh, Maind, Dwid, Sushen (group leader), Gandhmadan, Ulkhamukh, Anag. Before leaving Sugriv addressed them, "You are all familiar with the part of search assigned to you. I repeat the locations of rivers, territories, mountains and forests to be hunted by you. Among rivers Narmada, Godavari, Mahanadi, Krishnveni, Mahabhaga, Varada etc. have to fully searched. The territories of visit shall be Mekal, Utkal, Dasharn, Abravanti, Awantipuri, Vidarbha, Rishtik, Mahshik, Vang, Kaling, Kaushik, Andhra, Pundr, Chol, Pandya, and Keral. The mountain ranges of Vindhya is very important."

He further guided, "Visit Malay *giri* (mountain) and have *darshan* (visit respectfully) of the sage Agastya. Seeking his permission, cross Tamrparni running along sandal wood forests, and this river ends in sea leaving behind several charming lakes and water bodies. Moving across the *pandya* territory, you will reach sea shore. The sage Agastya has established one mountain deep in the sea which is called Mahendrgiri and is covered with groves of trees at its peaks. Gods, *yaksh*, sages and celestial dancers keep on visiting this mountain. Beyond the sea is an island spread over one hundred *yojan*, is fully protected beyond the reach of humans. This island of Lanka is our main destination because it is inhabited by Ravan and we are searching him to end his life. While crossing the sea, there is a danger of a demoness called Angaraka who kills the beings by catching their shadow and pulling them down to her deadly grip."

Sugriv described the places beyond Lanka, "Beyond Lanka, in sea is the mountain Pushipitak which is one hundred *yojan* wide. This mountain is visited by *sidha* and *charan* and has two peaks. The golden<sup>11</sup> one is visited daily by sun, and the silver peak is visited by moon (4-41-30). Those peaks are not visible to atheist, cruel and ungrateful ones. All of you should bow down your head in honour of that mountain. Another mountain *Suryavan* is fourteen *yojan* beyond the pushipitak and has difficult access. Farther to *Suryavan* is *Vaidyut* mountain full of delicious fruits and honey. Next is *Kunjar* mountain over which the sage Agastya has a beautiful residential palace which is one *yojan* wide and ten *yojan* long. On the same mountain there is city inhabited by serpents and is called *bhogawati*. The king of the serpents Vasuki stays here. Further ahead you will find *Rishabha* mountain where you will see varieties of sandal woods, viz., *goshirshak*, *padamak*, *harishyam* etc. You should never use those sandals because it is heavily protected by *gandharv rohit*. Five chiefs of *gandharva*, viz., Shailush, Gramani, Shiksh, Shuk and Babhru also stay there.

Sugriv further indicated about the worlds of gods and *pitru lok* situated beyond *Rishabha* mountain where humans couldn't find access. There only darkness has its domain and beyond the bounds of living terrestrial beings. He advised the team to make all attempt

<sup>11</sup> Two peaks suggest that sun and moon have separate movement orbits.

before that world, and he would be pleased the news about Sita within thirty days. Whoever would break the auspicious news to me would receive my full brotherly and friendly favour.

#### 4-42 Team to the west (58 / 1698)

Sugriva approached Sushen, father of Tara, and father-in-law, offering him salutation, designated him the leader of the group leading to the west. The team comprised of sons of several sages among them were Archishashman, and Marich (also called Archimalya) the sons of the sage Marichi. Two hundred thousand monkeys accompanied this team.

Sugriv describing the places to be looked into mentioned, “*Saurashtr*, *Bahlik*, and *Chadrchitr* where groves of trees of *punnag*, *bakul*, *uddalak* and *kevara* existed in abundance. The western territory, in general, is dominated by desert having surrounding of tough mountainous terrain. Further to that is western sea with *timi* fish and terrible crocodiles. The coastal area is full of fragrant bushes of *kevara*, trees of *tamal*, and coconuts. The coastal cities of *Murvaipattan*, *Jatapur*, *Avanti*, and *Anglepapuri* should not be missed. At the confluence of the river *sindhu* and sea is the colossal mountain of *Somagiri* which has got one hundred peaks. Over those peaks one can see forest of large trees where gigantic birds, *Sinh सिंह* are found. Those birds pick *timi* fish from the sea, and elephants from the forests, and carry them to the *somagiri* peaks. The elephants carried by these birds enjoy the natural environment rich in trees and water of the peaks. The monkeys who are capable of assuming the body of any being, need to search the peaks for Sita.”

He continued, “In the midst of the sea there is one mountain called *Pariyatr* which has golden peak spread over one hundred *yojan*. This place is inhabited by twenty four crore (240 million) *gandharv* whose body shine like fire. No one of you should pluck or damage fruits and trees, for they are closely guarded by those *gandharv*. Mighty among you should not worry about the strength of those *gandharv*. Near to *Pariyatr* is another mountain called *vajr* which has formations of very hard stone like diamond. This is spared over an area of hundred *yojan* wide and long. There are several caves over this mountain, and Sita must be searched in all of them.”

Before dwelling upon *astachala* and *meru*, Sugriv mentioned, “In one quarter of the sea is the mountain known as *chakrvan* where the celestial craftsman (*viswakarma*) had created *sahasrar chakr*. Vishnu killed *panchjanya* and *hayagriv* demons here, and grabbed from them *panchjanya* conch and *sudarshan* disc (4-42-28). Beyond that is *varah* mountain spread over sixty four *yojan*. You will find a golden city, *pragjyotish* which is the place of a famous demon *narak*. Sita must be carefully searched here. Further to that is *Meghagiri* where thousands of springs are found. The area has innumerable lions, tigers, elephants and boars moving around the springs. Gods had crowned *Indr* as ruler here, and he was called *pakshasan Indr* who used green horses.”

Sugriv described the frontier of the earth formed by *meru* and *astachal*, “Farther to *Indr*’s *meghagiri* are situated sixty thousand golden mountains and amidst them is the famous

*meru parvat*. Earlier sun had blessed this mountain that those who would stay here would be bright like gold. The trees over here are all of gold. Gods, demons, and gandharva residing here are shining golden. *Viswadev*, *Vasu*, *Marudgan* and other gods arrive on this sacred mountain everyday in the evening to offer their respectful worship to sun. Ten thousand *yojan* away from *meru* is *astachal* which is abode of *varun*. In coming from *meru* to this place, sun takes about half *muhurt* only (4-42-43). There is one magnificent and vey high golden palm tree located in the mid of *meru* and *astachal*. This tree has ten branches, and the oblation squares below this tree are of rare formation and importance. You must visit this place also. There is one renowned sage Merusavarni, who stay at *meru* and is capable of carrying out creation like *prajapati*. You must offer your respect over his feet and enquire about Sita from him. Beyond *astachal* the world is beyond the bound of the mortals and all of you should meticulously look into all the places upto here. You need to comeback on completion of one month and those found late would be given capital punishment.”

#### 4-43 Team to the north (62 / 1760)

Shatabali was appointed the team leader of one hundred thousand monkeys who were children of *yamaraj*. They were asked to visit the territories of *mlech*, *pulind*, *shursen*, *prasthal*, *bharat*, *kuru*, *madr*, *kamboj*, *yavan*, and that of the *shak*. The Himalayas were to be visited specially where the bushes of *lodhr*, and *padamak* are famous. The forest of *devdaru* trees had to be searched carefully.

Sugriv mentioned, “The hermitage of *somashram* shall be hunted where gods and *gandharv* reside delightfully. Beyond that, the mountain of *kal* should not be missed. Here several golden mines exist and all the mines had to be verified. After this is sudarshan mountain, and beyond that is *devasakh* mountain where varieties of birds are found. Thereafter lonely desert exists which is spared over hundred *yojan*. White brilliant *Kailas* is on the northern edge of the desert. Kuber has his abode over *Kailas* and his mansion is made of *jambunad* gold. There is a large lake in its vicinity having varieties of lotuses visited by royal swans and other birds. After this are situated famous caves of *kronchgiri*. Accomplished sages stay here. Further to this is *manas* peak devoid of living beings, including spirits, demons and gods. This is also called *kamsail* known for penance place of cupid, god of lust. Thereafter is *mainak* mountain abode of *may danav* मय दानव who has built a magnificent fort for himself. Here you can find horse like mouth of female *kinnar*. Crossing this zone will lead you the area where hermitages of accomplished sages are found who are worshipped by gods. The sages are *sidha*, *vaikhanas*, and *valkhilya* who are sinless and pure. There is one lake called *vaikhanas sar* having golden lotus and golden swans. *Sarvbhaum* elephants used in the carriage of kuber roam around this lake. Beyond this lake is a large and lonely zone where no stars, sun or moon is visible but it is always lighted with the brilliance of sages staying in this part. Further to this is *shailoda* river, where groves of *keechak* bamboo are found. This bamboo itself produces the sound of a flute, and sages use this bamboo to cross the river *shailoda*. On the other bank of *shailoda* is *uttar kuru* where sacred souls reside. This area has thousands of rivers gifted with green leave lotuses. The lakes in this area

has red water and red lotuses. The banks and beds of the rivers and the lakes are made of precious gems. The trees bear varieties of fruits, and where different kind of birds have made their nests. The trees yield comfortable beds and other luxurious materials. These trees also bear women of exquisite beauty. *Gandharv, kinnar, nag, vidyadhar* stay here with these women as their consorts. Everybody is happy here.

Sugriv described about north sea and land out of bounds of living beings, "Moving further one can find north sea, and in its centre is seen the *somgiri* mountain abode of *Vishnu, rudra* and *brahma*. Sun doesn't have access to this mountain, and is resplendent with its own golden brilliance. You can't go beyond that and after the glimpse of somgiri you should return back."

Concluding, Sugriv wished them good luck, and assured them warm greetings on their return and prize of fabulous and precious gifts.

#### **4-44 Hanuman carried Ram's ring (17 / 1777)**

Sugriv had a conviction that Hanuman would be able to achieve the objective. Having this in mind he confided with Hanuman, "Your movement is free like your father vayu, in all the worlds of gods, demons, gandharv, and others. I am sure you would find out Sita soon. Your strength, knowledge of scriptures, command of expression and loyalty suggest that the goal is achievable by you."

Ram watched Sugriv confiding on Hanuman. He also had a natural inclination towards Hanuman. He took out his ring carved with his name and offering that to Hanuman spoke, "Sugriv has full confidence of your loyalty, knowledge, strength and sincerity. Take this ring and this will enable you to win the confidence of Sita. She would be able to freely express her feelings and impressions to you."

Hanuman gladly possessed that ring and putting that over his head as a mark of great respect to that ring, he offered his sincere salutation to the feet of Ram. When he was about to move Ram again spoke, "O, excellent one, make all efforts to find her out."

#### **4-45 Monkeys expressed their confidence (17 / 1794)**

Sugriv addressing monkeys asked them to find out Sita at the earliest. Shatabali moved to the north towards the Himalayas. Vinat marched towards east. Hanuman, Tar and Angad moved in the south, the direction of the sage Agastya. Sushen moved to the west, towards the abode of varun.

While they were moving out jubilantly producing sound of happiness, they passed close to Sugriv and each one of them expressed confidence, "I am alone able to cross hundred *yojan* and would bring Sita alive here after killing Ravan. No place, either deep sea, nether world or high sky is beyond my reach."

Monkeys moved out on their mission, and Ram and Lakshaman stayed at *prasravgiri* awaiting the end of thirty days assigned to them.



**4-46 Sugriv narrated his wandering (24 / 1818)**

Ram wondered as to how Sugriv was familiar with the minute details of the geography of the globe. On his enquiry, Sugriv revealed, "When Vali had come back after killing the demon, and I was on the throne assuming he was killed by that demon, he became angry upon me. His anger turned into enmity and he wanted to kill me. With this objective he chased me. Running out I went to the east upto *udyachal* wandering through all the rivers, forests and mountains. When I saw him following me there, I turned to the south and went to the end. Vali didn't spare me in this direction also, and scared of life, I ran in the west direction. He continued his chase, compelling me to run to the north. When I found him chasing me there also, on the advice of Hanuman, I took shelter here. Under fear of curse of death, Vali couldn't enter this area. This is how, wandering, scared of life, and being chased by Vali, I came across all the places over earth."

**4-47 Monkeys couldn't find Sita (14 / 1832)**

Monkeys began coming back after end of one month. First came back Vinat, from the east and mentioned about the unavailability of Sita in that direction. Next return was of Shatabali from the north, and he too was without any clue about Sita. Sushen from the west arrived back having no hint about her. They all offered their respect to Ram at *prasravan* and pinned their hope on Hanuman who had gone to the south, in the direction Sita was learnt to have been abducted.

**4-48 Southern monkeys on quest (24 / 1856)**

The team lead by Angad and accompanied by Hanuman commenced their quest from *vindhya* mountains. They passed through all the places of settlements, forests, mountains, rivers and lakes. Continuing thus they came across a tough terrain without any life and trace of water. The rivers and ponds were lying dry. Trees had neither flower nor fruits. The sage Kandu had conducted penance in that zone and he lost his ten year son there. Getting angry, he cursed the terrain to be devoid of all the natural resources.

Moving to the adjoining zone which was also tough, they met a gigantic demon. The demon scared them saying their life had run out. Angad took that giant as Ravan, and he hurled such a strong slap over his cheek that he fell bleeding through his mouth and died immediately. Encouraged the monkeys intensified their search but couldn't find the clue about Sita. Disappointed they took shelter under a tree.

**4-49 Encouragement by Angad and Gandhamadan (22 / 1878)**

Angad was concerned about the passing of days without any outcome. He addressed the fellow monkeys, "We are all aware about the unfailing punishment of strict Sugriv. Our assigned period is fast running out. We need to muster our courage, and with sincerity resume the mission again. Sincere efforts are known to yield sweet results." Gandhamadan, although tired and thirsty, but encouraged the team by promptly supporting the statement of Angad.

#### 4-50 Monkeys in a mysterious cave (41 / 1919)

They searched intensively all the areas of the *vindhya* range and from there moved towards south-west. The assigned period of the mission was over. Passing through deep forest and tough mountains they felt thirsty. In the meanwhile they could see the entry of a cave covered with green creepers and bushes. They also saw birds coming out of the cave whose body had were wet with water. Getting the indication of water inside the cave, they moved inside. The cave was known as rikshbil and was guarded by a demon. The entry was narrow, long and dark. The monkeys were groping in the dark joining their hands together. After a long trekking they could see open brightness. They found varieties of fruit and flower bearing trees, ponds of water, and mansions made of gold and silver around there. The mansions were rich in all living provisions. The fruits and flowers were golden, and the ponds had the fish and floating lotus all of gold. Moving ahead they came to a place where a woman in an ascetic's garb was immersed in meditation. Getting closer, Hanuman enquired about her identity and about the cave city.

#### 4-51 Monkeys treated with food (19 / 1938)

Hanuman expressed further, "O, goddess ! We are surprised with the affluence of the place. We wonder whether these are all real or magic of demons." The woman ascetic replied, "You must have heard about the demon maya (मय ). Pleasing bramha he got the boon of skill of architect (*viswakarma*) for creating marvelous structures. He was endowed with all the skills of structural formation of Sukracharya. Creating this place, he stayed here for pretty long time with comfort. Later, he came in contact with the celestial dancer, Hema. Indr became angry for his relation with Hema. He killed the demon in a combat, and thereafter, Brahma gifted this place to Hema. Being a dear friend of Hema, I was deputed by her protect this place. I am daughter of *merusavarni*, and my name is Swyamprabha. I wonder how did you locate this place. She enquired, "Who are you, and why are you moving in this deep forest? Here is delicious fruits and water; take them and feel comfortable."

#### 4-52 Monkeys out from the cave (32 / 1970)

When monkeys had finished their food and appeared fresh with their renewed energy, Swayamprabha enquired, "If you could do it, tell me about yourself." Hanuman narrated frankly the entire story, "Ram son of Dasarath had been to forest with his wife Sita and brother Lakshaman. The demon, Ravan abducted Sita from Janasthan. Ram forged friendship with Sugriv, the king of monkeys. We have been deputed by Sugriv in quest of Sita. Searching the tough and deep forests and mountains of *vindhya* we were tired, thirsty and hungry. Finding indications of water in this cave, we entered here. With your grace we were served the food and water and now we are fresh to continue on our mission although the assigned period had elapsed. We have to hunt the sea and forward as Sita couldn't be located in *Vindhya* and its surroundings. We doubt we would be able to get out of this cave. You help us in getting out from here and guide us against the wrath of Sugriv, as our life is limited now."

Swyamprabha responded positively to their appeal, "I have nothing to do with the worldly trifflings and I enjoy this life of penance and meditation. Although no body gets out alive from this cave, I would help you. All of you have to close your eyes."

As advised, monkeys closed their eyes with their hands and fingers. Soon they were out of the cave. Swyamprabha coming out spoke to them, "*Vindhya* is here, and *prasravan* is on the other side. Sea is on your front. You go ahead with your mission." Saying thus, she got into the cave.

#### **4-53 Angad proposed suicidal fast (27 / 1997)**

When they saw the towering waves of the sea, they became more afraid of their failure. Angad spoke to them, "I am afraid of my life now. Failed in mission, and assigned period is gone, if I go back to Sugriv, he would kill me. I was crowned with the initiative of Ram. Sugriv had hardly any softness for me. My death is imminent. Instead of getting killed by Sugriv, I would rather prefer to end my life here by keeping fast unto death."

Other monkeys were equally afraid of their failed mission. Breaking the uneasy quietness, Tar, spoke to them, "I would prefer to enter the cave of Swyamprabha and spend the life there instead of getting killed by Sugriv. Once inside, I would be free from all the fear. There is no dearth of food inside, and therefore this option is better." Other monkeys, including Angad were impressed by his proposal and they appeared to be in favour of his idea."

#### **4-54 Hanuman persuaded the monkeys (22 / 2019)**

Sensing Angad favouring the proposal of Tar, Hanuman became skeptical about the sovereignty of Sugriv. He apprehended, "Angad is skillful in expression, endowed with physical might and potential, and getting the support of these monkeys may grab the kingdom of Kishkindha from Sugriv." This anxiety gripped Hanuman. He was also expert in art of winning the people. He applied his tricks and caused split in the unanimity of the monkeys. Consequently he spoke to Angad, "These monkeys are more concerned about their wives and children. They would hardly accompany you in the cave. Your idea of eloping inside the cave is bound to flop. Indr has done partial damage to the cave and it would never be spared by Lakshman. He is quite capable to open up this cave with his arrows, and bring out the hidden ones outside. You need to review your impression about Sugriv. Including me, Jambvan, Neel, and Suhotr we are avowed supporters of Sugriv. Your apprehension about Sugriv appears to be unfounded. Once we go and submit our failure to him, I don't think he wouldn't pardon us. He is, for sure, more sympathetic to your mother and you. Besides you, he doesn't have any child."

#### **4-55 Angad accompanied on fast (23 / 2042)**

Angad was not convinced about the softness of Sugriv and spoke to Hanuman, "I don't take him a righteous and kind king. He is cruel and cunning. My father was alive and he grabbed my mother. He closed the door of the cave to eliminate my father forever. His ungratefulness to Ram was revealed when he was lost in the lust of women. The fear of

Lakshaman's arrows compelled him to take initiatives. He may either put me in jail or try to get me eliminated rather protect me. I have no faith on him."

Saying this he resolved to fast unto death. He chose a spot on the sea shore, spread a *kush* mat and sipping sea water to confirm his resolve, sat eastward on fast. His eyes had tears. Other monkeys were grieved to see this state of Angad. They also followed his suite and gathered around him keeping fast to die. They discussed and related the incidents: Ram in forest, killing of mighty demons (Khar, Dushan, Trishira), abduction of Sita, killing of Jatayu, friendship of Sugriv, end of Vali etc.

#### **4-56 Scared monkeys and Sampati (24 / 2066)**

In the meanwhile Sampati came out of the cave and had a view of the scores of monkeys on fast. He was glad to see that he would get enough food from the gradual death of those monkeys. He spoke out his mind loudly and praised his fate.

Hearing him thus speaking, monkeys fell in greater panic. To encourage them, Angad mentioned, "We appreciate our luck that for the cause of Ram we would also sacrifice our life as Jatayu had offered his life fighting the demon to save Sita." When Sampati heard about Jatayu's death he became grieved and wanted to know the exact cause of the incident. He spoke to monkeys, "I am elder brother of Jatayu. My brother stayed in Janasthan. Who was that demon who caused his death ? My wings are burnt from sun, I can't fly. Take me down this hill, and tell me the details about the happenings."

#### **4-57 Angad helped Sampati (19 / 2085)**

Speaking to monkeys, Sampati immersed in grief and lost the continuity of his voice. Monkeys were scared with his voice and took him as their killer. It occurred them, "He might devour all of us. But since we are on fast until death, why to scare then ? Sooner the better."

Considering thus, the eventual imminent death, Angad helped in getting him down to the level of the monkeys. He narrated the story, "Riksharaja was my grandfather. He had two sons: Vali my father, and Sugriv. In the forest of Dandakaranya , to honour the words of his father, king of Dasarath, Ram came to stay with his wife Sita and brother Lakshaman. Ravan abducted his wife Sita from Janasthan. Jatayu was friend of Dasarath, and when he saw Ravan taking away Sita from sky route, he fought valiantly. He broke the chariot of Ravan, and put Sita back on ground. Ultimately Ravan killed him and took away Sita. Ram performed the last rites of Jatayu. Sugriv my uncle befriended Ram. Sugriv was banished by my father, so he avenged by getting my father Vali killed by Ram and has become the king of monkeys. Under his command we have come out searching Sita. We were lost in the cave near here and our assigned period of finding out Sita is now over. We apprehend death at the hands of Sugriv for our failure to locate Sita. Ram, Lakshaman and Sugriv will be angry and would cause the end of our life. Therefore, under fear we resolved to fast until death."

#### 4-58 Sampati revealed Sita's place (37 / 2122)

When Sampati heard about Jatayu's end he was shocked and with tearful eyes he mentioned, "I have become old and wingless otherwise I would have avenged today the killing of my brother Jatayu. Earlier when both of us were young, I tell you an incident. Indr had killed Vritrasur; both of us, Jatayu and me attacked and won Indr. While coming back after registering victory over Indr, we went towards *anshumali* sun. My younger brother Jatayu felt the heat of sun, and in order to protect him I spread my wings over him. Consequently my wings were burnt and fell down on vindhya mountains. Since then, I haven't heard about my brother."

Angad enquired from Sampathi, "You are brother of Jatayu and if you know about Ravan's place, kindly enlighten us how to reach him."

Sampathi spoke, "I am wingless and helpless still I would assist in the sacred work of Ram. I know about Varun, the places where *Vaman bhagwan* placed thrice his foot. I have seen the battle of demons and gods, and the churning of sea for ambrosia. These are my known incidents. Due to my disability I am helpless. I saw once the devil Ravan, pacing through sky with a woman in his lap. She was crying hey Ram ! hey Lakshaman ! and due to her golden apparel she looked like a flashing light in the lap of the black demon. She was also throwing down her jewels. Because of her cry, I understand today, that the other day it was Sita being abducted by Ravan. I tell you now about Ravan. He is son of *Vishrawa* and brother of *Kuber*. He stays in Lanka, situated one hundred yojan from here in sea. Lanka was built by Viswakarma, and has golden gates and buildings. Within ramparts of Lanka, Sita is imprisoned and being guarded by strong contingent of demoness. From my concentration of mind, I visualize that you will comeback after meeting her."

Sampati further mentioned, "You have to make efforts to cross sea and reach Lanka. The first level nearest to earth is the flight route of sparrows and pigeons who live on cereals. Higher to this, on second level lies the route of flight of crows and other fruits eating birds. Higher to this is the third level suitable for eagles, *kronch* and *kurar* birds. Still higher is the fourth level used by hawk, and next higher of fifth level is for vultures. Next higher of sixth level is of swans, and still higher to this is the route of *garud*. I am a vulture and have genesis from *garud*. Due to some sinful act we vultures have become meat eaters. I would help you and avenge the misdeed of Ravan. I am able to see one hundred yojan away from here and I see Sita and Ravan in Lanka. I wish all success and I am convinced you will return successfully to Kishkindha after meeting Sita in Lanka. "

He then requested monkeys to take him to sea shore for he wanted to offer water tribute to his brother. Soon they carried him to sea and when he completed his tribute, he was taken back to his place.

#### 4-59 Sampathi narrated more about Sita and Ravan (28/ 2150)

Hearing Sampathi, Jambvan stood and asked him to tell more about Ravan and how to retrieve Sita.

Sampathi narrated one incident, “When I lied down wingless in forest, my son Suparshav fetches food for me every day. You know *gandharv* are known for lust, serpents are known for anger, deer are known for fear, and vultures are known for hunger (4-59-9). One day my son came late in the evening without any food. I was angry on him.”

My son submitted very mildly to me, “I was waiting for a prey with my beak down over sea shore. A black man holding a woman was crossing through the sky route. I wanted to offer that man and woman as your food, but when I stood on way, the man very softly requested me to leave him. Impressed by his soft submission I allowed him to fly. Immediately after that *sidha* approached and applauded my act of not killing that man and woman. They told that black man was demon king Ravan. The woman was in great grief, and her hair had spread out, while her jewels were falling down. She was crying hey Ram ! hey Lakshaman ! I spent my time in watching that. That is the reason I came empty handed.”

Sampathi continued, “Since I had no wings, I couldn’t do anything. It is time now for you to act and you are capable to do that. Ram is blessed with deadly arrows gifted by Brahma. He would win over Ravan. You are also mighty and should not delay any more. Plan the initiatives to see Sita immediately.”

#### 4-60 Autobiography of Sampathi (1) (21 / 2171)

Sampathi revived the courage in the hearts of monkeys. When he came back from sea shore, he was surrounded by them. He recalled his past, “Having burnt my wings I fell over one of the peaks of *vindhya*, and remained unconscious for six days. When some consciousness arose, I was not able to locate the place. Later I could understand it to be *vindhya*. With great difficulty I crawled from mountain top to the ground. In the past there used to be a great sage Nishakar, in this locality. He was an accomplished sage and was worshipped by gods and other beings. He is now no more and I stayed here for eight thousand years after his departure. I with Jatayu had met him earlier. I tried to see the sage again and with much difficulty arrived at his ashram. Sage was not present, so I was waiting for his arrival. I saw him coming surrounded by lions, serpents, deer and elephants. When he entered his ashram those wild animals dispersed. After a couple of hours the sage came out and coming to me tried to locate me. He recalled that both I and Jatayu used to touch his feet in the form of a human being. He identified me as one of the two, and asked as to what caused the loss of my wings.”

#### 4-61 Autobiography of Sampathi...(2)....continued (17 / 2188)

As desired by the sage to know the details of the incident, I narrated, “Having proud of our prowess, one day we two brothers raced against sun to meet him before he reached

*astachal*. We continued soaring high passing through several worlds. We reached the height from where the forest of the earth looked like grass, hills appeared like stone, and rivers appeared as if threads were tying the stones. *Meru*, the *Himalayas*, and *vindhya* appeared like elephants. We were on the route of the sun as looked if we were wheels of his chariot. The heat was so intense that I lost the sense of direction and location, and capability of vision. Concentrating mind with great difficulty I could see sun. Jatayu had, by this time decided to return downwards. I saw him getting down. I also followed covering him by my wings. Due to carelessness my wings were burnt, and I guessed Jatayu fell over Janasthan while I fell over *vindhya*.”

Further, I submitted to the sage, “I have lost my influence over the domain of the birds. Having separated from the brother, wingless and afflicted with deep wounds I am waiting to die.”

#### 4-62 Autobiography of Sampathi...(3)....continued (15 / 2203)

The sage kept quiet in mediation for a couple of hours and spoke to me, “You need not worry, I can revive your wings now, but I want to use you for greater purpose. A time will come when both of your small and big wings will sprout automatically.”

The sage continued, “In the family of Ikshavaku there shall be a king Dasarath. His most able son, Ram would come in the forest with his wife and brother. His wife Sita will be stolen by the demon king Ravan. The demon will try to influence her but she will always be immersed in the memory of her husband, Ram. Her denial of taking anything, would concern Indr, and he would provide her divine ambrosia, kheer with milk porridge. First offer she will make by place the part of the kheer on earth for her husband and his brother.”

The sage reminded me, “The monkey messengers will come here trying to locate Sita. You stay here awaiting the arrival of those monkeys and you will tell them about Sita and her position in Lanka. This will reap great benefit to you for you will be serving the entire creation for their welfare.”

The sage had expressed his wish to have *darshan* of both the divine brothers but due to constraint of age he had to depart earlier.

#### 4-63 Autobiography of Sampathi...(4)....continued (15 / 2218)

Sampathi continued his story, “The sage Nishakar consoled me in several ways before he entered his ashram. I also left the place and came to stay over the *vindhya*. Since then I am awaiting your arrival. Getting impatient of long waiting period of eight thousand years, I several times attempted to commit suicide but the words of the sage kept me alive. When my son let Ravan go scot free I was not happy with him. I knew the strength of Ravan and my son could have easily dealt him, but he missed the opportunity.”

Sampathi was narrating the story thus to the monkeys that his red new wings sprouted. He became recharged with new vigour. Expressing his happiness to the monkeys, he

assured them about good and auspicious future. Excited to test his wings, Sampathi took the flight up in the sky.

The monkeys also were encouraged to take up renewed initiatives to see Sita in Lanka.

#### 4-64 How to cross the sea (22 / 2240)

The monkeys arrived on the sea shore and were jubilant to take up the gigantic assignment of crossing the sea. When they looked over the sea and its vastness, they again got disappointed, "At some places the sea was quiet, at another it had small but rising tides, and still at other places towering tides were in view." The monkeys were at a loss and Angad tried to find out some way out. He asked them, "Who would take the credit of keeping us alive from the death penalty of Sugriv ? Who is going to win the laurel of performing the sacred work of Ram ?" Despite his several exhortations, none of the monkeys came forward.

Angad then enquired, "Let us assess one by one, who can go upto what extent ?"

#### 4-65 Hanuman approached (35 / 2275)

Each one of them spoke about their capability, and according to them their individual extent to cover was expressed in measure of *yojan*: Gaj for ten, Gavaksh for twenty, Sharabh for thirty, Rishabh for forty, Gandhmadan for fifty, Maind for sixty, Dwid for seventy, Sushen for eighty.

Jambvan spoke to them, "I have grown old now, but still I feel I can cross upto ninety *yojan*. There was a time when I was young, and I saw *vaman bhagawan* measuring the universe. At that time, in short time, I made complete round very swiftly."

Angad then spoke, "I can cross one hundred *yojan* wide sea, but I am not sure about my return journey."

Jambvan intervened, "I am aware of your capability, that you can cross hundreds of thousands of *yojan*, but how can we afford our leader to do that. You have to find someone from us for this job by setting aside yourself."

Angad was disappointed, "We don't see any way out, and our last resort is again the fast until we die."

Jambvan assured him, "I would find a valiant who can do this task."

He went to Hanuman, who was sitting alone, away from the teaming monkeys.

#### 4-66 Jambvan encouraged Hanuman (38 / 2313)

Jambvan addressed Hanuman, "Why are you sitting alone? We need your help. Your potential is like *garud गरुड* (son of Vinata विनता, in the lineage of *Kashyap कश्यप*). Your arms



are as capable as *garud*'s wings. We commonly see *garud* deep in sea catching snakes. Your skill, talent, and potential are in no way inferior to *garud*."

He further narrated in brief how he was born, "There was a famous celestial dancer, Punjiksthala (पुञ्जिकस्थला) . Due to curse, she was born as a daughter to the monkey Kunjar. Her name was *Anjana* (अञ्जना) and she was capable of moving in the guise of humans. Once she was on a hill top enjoying alone the natural environment. The *vayu* god was impressed by her beauty and he embraced her. Initially *Anjana* objected but later, *vayu* god convinced her that he would bless her with a son equally strong and capable as him who would be able to move around freely in the universe as I do, besides being learned and knowledgeable. Subsequently she gave birth to you in a cave. Once while you were infant, assuming the rising sun as a fruit, made a rapid stride towards him. In a trice you were up three hundred *yojan*, and when you arrived at *udayachal*, Indr charged his bolt on you. This caused injury to your left chin हनु . *Vayu* god, your father got angry, and he stopped his movement. The absence of air caused chaos in the universe. Gods began pursuing him to yield. In the process of persuasion Brahma blessed you not to be killed by any of the weapons. Indr blessed you to be master of your death, i.e., die on your will. This incident caused you to be called Hanuman हनुमान."

Jambvan tried to impress upon him citing his own incidents, "Now I am old and not able to match the necessity of the situation. There was a time, when I gave rapid and quick twenty one rounds of the universe as an act of respect to *vaman bhagwan* who was then in His cosmic strides. During the ocean churning, I quickly collected necessary herbs from all over to facilitate the process of churning. I urge upon you to use your potential for our welfare. Your movement is matchless and you can easily cross the sea. Help out the disappointed monkeys, and come out with your forward steps as *vaman bhagwan* had done earlier."

### 67 Hanuman in readiness (49 / 2362)

Inspired and encouraged by Jambvan, Hanuman readily showed his desire to cross the sea. Before taking up the stride, he expanded his body demonstrating his potential to undertake the assignment. Time and again he moved around his tail and gradually enlarged his body. The monkeys surrounded him and began producing joyful sound to honour his initiative. They were looking to him as if world were looking to *vaman bhagwan*.

Reminded of his own potential, filled him with rare spirit. He stood among the monkeys and paid his respect to them. He addressed them with full confidence, "The assignment of crossing sea could be done by *vayu*, *garud* and me. I can go round mighty *meru* thousand times. My momentum can stir the sea causing flood over the entire earth. For sure, I can uproot the entire Lanka and carry it on my palm. I have the spirit and speed of *vayu*, and I can give thousand rounds to *garud* quickly. You can imagine my speed: I can follow sun when he moves from *udyachal*, go to *astachal* before he reaches there,

come back to earth and again go and touch him before his arrival to *astachal*. See my body identical to *meru* now and I would fly across the sea accompanied by several trees and flowers dragged by my impulse and momentum. Today you will see my real performance. My form while crossing the sea would be like the cosmic body of *vaman bhagwan*. My wit is consistently supported by my will to act and the real performance. I am confident of visiting Sita today.”

Jambvan greatly appreciated his initiative and expressed his utmost happiness. Before you leave, we intend to recite *swasti* mantra for abiding auspiciousness. We would be passionately awaiting your arrival here after visiting Sita. By that time we all would stand on one foot only.

Hanuman revealed, “When I would take the leap, only *mahendr* mountain would be able to sustain the back pressure under my foot.”

Mentioning this he moved quickly to the *mahendr* top. His movement caused breaking of several peaks, and the entire mountain rocked like swinging cradle. The tigers, lions and elephants produced deafening roars. *Gandharv* and other celestial bodies were scared, and began leaving the mountain. The serpents stick out half body from the holes as if numerous flags fluttered over the mountain peaks.

Looking towards his destination Lanka, Hanuman concentrated his mind fully on the commencement of the gigantic stride.

Srimate Ramanujay nama**Preface**

*Sundar kand* is the fifth of the submissions in the successive series of condensed *Valmiki Ramayan*. In fact this *kand* deserves to be called *Hanuman kand*. Hanuman (variously known as Anjaneya, Mahaveer, Vajrangvali) has performed all divine deeds right from crossing of sea to burning of Lanka. The entire content of this *kand* hinges about Hanuman only.

The incident of Jayant, son of Indr, disguised as crow pecking at Sita had taken place much earlier while she was in *chitrakoot*, but it has been divulged in *Sundar kand* (sarg 38) instead of *Aranya kand*.

It is the special feature of Valmiki Ramayan that while depicting any incident it is supplemented through different *sarg*, viz., Indrajeet was directed by Ravan to fight alone (sarg 48) with Hanuman, but in sarg 58 Hanuman is found to eliminate his accompanying demons also. The reading of Valmiki therefore requires lot of attentive correlation.

There are 68 *sarg* in this *kand* and together they consist of total 2858 *sanskrit shlok*. The *shlok* in earlier four submissions had been 11,405 and putting this fifth one of *Sundar kand* together, the sum total becomes 14,263 in the initial five *kand* of *Valmiki Ramayan*.

**Srimann Narayan Charnau Sharnam Prapaddy.** (श्रीमन्नारायण चरणौ शरणम् प्रपदे )

Submission:

Srikrishna Prapnnachari

*Falgun krishan Tryodashi*  
*Mahashivratri*

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*Srimate Ramanujaya namah*

## **Sundar kand**

**(68 sarg)**

### **5-1 Flight across the sea (213 / 213)**

In order to develop sufficient momentum before taking off, Hanuman moved briskly over the top of *mahendr* mountain. He also kept applying pressure under his feet which created several new streams having water of various colours. The mountain coming to the state of swing caused wild animals to take shelter inside the caves making terrible sound. Enraged deadly serpents vomited poison breaking out ferocious fire. Splinters of stone pieces continued flying in air.

*Vidyadhar* (celestial beings) who were inhabitants of the *mahendr*, quit the mountain. In haste, they left behind their drinks in golden pots, swords, and other precious household belongings. Their wives accompanied them producing musical notes from their anklets. *Vidyadhar* were nicely dressed having sandal paste, red garlands, and lotus like charming eyes. Scared they stood outside in sky, while their pleasant wives continued smiling on their side. Watching anxiously towards the mountain, they heard *Sidha*, *charan* and sages, who had gathered in sky, saying, "Hanuman, the son of *Vayu* is in preparatory stage of a very arduous task, of taking a magnificent leap to Lanka. He is on a mission to find out Sita, wife of Ram. He has grown mountainous and is now about to take stride in the sky."

While, still in preparatory make up, he offered his respects to all gods: sun, Indr, Brahma, *vayu* and other gods. Keeping east face, he particularly made salutation with folded hands to his father, *vayu*.

He spoke to his fellow monkeys, "I would find out Sita in Lanka. If she is not available there, I would go hunting all the heavens. In case I don't find her, I would fetch Ravan in fetters, or else I would produce entire uprooted Lanka to Ram."

Hanuman, curling up his tail high, pressed both his arms against the side rocks, and pressing hard on his feet he rose in the sky. His take off momentum was so massive that a tempest took place around the *mahendra* (महेन्द्र पर्वत). Heavy and light, small and large, all sorts of trees with fruits and flowers came along uprooted with him. Initial moments of his leaving the mountain, created a view as if moon like Hanuman was amidst the stars. Subsequently, the heavy trees dropped down in the sea, while the lighter ones bedecked with flowers still followed him in trails. The sea down below was covered with varieties of flowers dropping away from the trails set ablaze by him. Closely dotted with flowers, the sea looked like an inverted sky full of stars. Having air borne, cruising towards Lanka, both his hands were spread wide with fingers hissing like angry serpents. His mammoth form was like a brilliant speeding comet. His eyes glowed like sun and moon. The wind past his arm pits produced sound of thundering clouds. His shadow looked like a boat surfing over sea waters, while his body in the sky resembled the sail of the cruising boat.

He appeared like a flying mountain, and his shadow covered an area ten *yojan* wide and thirty *yojan* long (5-1-76). His high speed created such an impulsive wind pressure that sea water immediately below him changed to the shape of a large sized bowl. The bowl formation of water continued along his trajectory, i.e., with his moment to moment shift in position, the deep and wide bowl of water followed closely down below him over the sea surface. This gave a feeling of an automatic creation of channel over the sea surface indicating his line of movement in the sky.

In his honour, gods and celestial beings showered flowers over him, while sages offered their prayer and good wishes for his success. Sun and wind had become modest facilitating his movement.

Sea, recalling the gratefulness of Sagar, a king of the *Ikshavaku* family, felt obligatory to honour Hanuman who was on a mission of Ram, a glorious member of the same *Ikshavaku* house. He asked *Mainak*, a mountain inside sea, "Indr had deputed you here to block the route of the demons coming out from the nether world (5-1-92 / 93). You have been doing that successfully for long. I know your capability to expand in all directions. It is time for you to expand high in sky so that you can offer a rest place to Hanuman, who is speedily moving through sky on a special service to Ram."

When *Mainak* rose to the level of Hanuman, he thought rising of an obstacle, and he pushed that down with his chest. *Mainak*, in the guise of human being, appeared over the peak, and submitted to Hanuman, "Sea has been largely benefited and got enlarged due to efforts of one of the forefathers of Ram. Under that obligation, I have been sent by the sea, to honour you on your mission. My peaks are full of roots and fruits. You may pause here for some time to relax. Besides, I am here under my personal obligation to you. Earlier in *satyug*, like *garud*, the mountains had wings and used to fly from one place to another. Sages and other beings were always afraid of the calamity of falling of mountains over them. Indr took it seriously and he cut down the wings of the mountains. I was saved because of your father, *vayu*, who pushed me down deep in sea. Then onward, I stay<sup>1</sup> in sea and was saved against the tirade of Indr." Hanuman obliged him by touching and mentioned, "I don't have time to take rest. I have assured my fellow monkeys that I wouldn't take any rest before reaching Lanka."

This act of Hanuman won him praise from gods and sages.

In order to confirm his strength, wit and intellect, gods sent *Sursa* (mother of *nag*, i.e., serpents) to Hanuman. Disguised as a fierce demoness, she stood obstructing the way of Hanuman. "I am hungry, and I ask you to enter my mouth, I would eat you" , spoke *Sursa*. Hanuman said, "Ram, the son of Dasarath had been staying in *Dandkaranya* with his wife Sita, and brother Lakshaman. Ravan abducted his wife to Lanka. I am on an urgent mission to Lanka. Having met Sita, and conveying her message to Ram, I would

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<sup>1</sup> It seems because of *Mainak* being present hiding in sea, Indr later assigned a duty to him, to bar the movement of demons through sea route.



be back to your service. Leave me now.” She didn’t heed, and stood before him with widely open mouth, “Brahma has blessed me that no one would escape me.”

Her insistence irritated Hanuman, and he enlarged himself to ten *yojan*. In response, she opened her mouth to twenty *yojan*. When Hanuman got to thirty, her mouth went to forty; when he was fifty, she did it to sixty; when he was seventy, her mouth was eighty; on getting to ninety, she expanded to hundred *yojan*. Hanuman, instantly was in the size of a thumb, and getting fast into her mouth, he jumped out swiftly; then he mentioned, “I have obeyed your command of getting into your mouth.”

*Sursa* was highly impressed by his witty potential, and appearing in her original form wished him all success in early completion of the sacred work of joining Ram and Sita together.

Hanuman continued his onward journey cruising past the clouds. Soon he was spotted by a demoness called *Sinhika*. Impressed by his large body, she thought of adequate meat in him to keep her satisfied for a long time. She withheld him by catching his shadow and he was stalled. He became helpless, and when looked around could see her down over the sea water. He was reminded of the alert given by Sugirv. Gravitating his body, he enlarged also like rainy season cloud. *Sinhika* opened her mouth equal to his body. He fell into her mouth, and because of his heavy weight he succeeded in damaging her heart. Mutilating her into pieces, using his sharp nails, he came out successfully. She was dead, and the celestial beings showered praises over him and expressed their confidence of completing the intended work.

When he reached on the other side of the sea, he could see Lanka surrounded by greeneries over the mountain top. Like the northern shore, several rivers joined the sea on its Lanka side shore also.

He thought, “If I keep the same large body, the demons would notice my presence.” Thinking thus, he got back to his normal body as *Trivikram*<sup>2</sup> *bhagwan* had withdrawn himself in his initial form.

## 5-2 Entering strategy (58 / 271)

Standing on the top of *trikut* mountain he took a panoramic view of Lanka. It was surrounded by trees and greeneries. The outer ramparts had a large ditch full of water. The demons on guard were fully equipped with bow and spears. The buildings were seven and storied high with golden pillars. The windows had golden grills and screens. Strolling slowly he came towards the northern gate which was made of gold and as high as sky.

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<sup>2</sup> Valmiki was so much impressed by the Trivikrama and Vaman incarnation, that he fondly quotes this at several places in the Ramayan !

Hanuman found Lanka as if a swimming object in air. Broadly it looked like a woman, "Ramparts as thighs, groves and sea as apparel, high structures as ear rings, etc."

Awesome view of the city created deep anxiety, and he thought even if the monkeys arrive here they won't be able to enter this city. Only four of us, Angad, Neel, me and Sugriv would be able to get into it.

Pondering thus, he thought of entering the city at night so that he could move around unnoticed. He was anxious to find out Sita and therefore thought, "If I enter in my normal form, the demons would kill me. The city is full of demons as if serpents are residing in *bhogawatipuri* (भोगवतीपुरी) of the nether world. If I disguise as a demon, I would be detected. Let alone me, if wind god (*vayu*) also assumes a guise here he would be caught by the demons. Let me enter as a monkey but in the size of a cat."

It was after dusk, Hanuman, in a cat size, jumped over the ramparts near the entry gate. He looked very attractive in his cat size body. The night being moon lit facilitated his onward movement.

### 5-3 Lankini surrendered (51 / 322)

Hanuman had just entered and was again awestricken seeing the grand and heavily fortified Lanka which was situated on the peaks of the mountain called Lamb<sup>3</sup>. Seven / eight storied high buildings, with gold<sup>4</sup> finished windows and ramparts was the common scene of the city. The clouds impregnated with regular lightning (5-3-5) illuminated<sup>5</sup> the city and its streets. The green groves and wide streets were impressive. He thought, "This city is really impregnable. Only a few monkeys besides me: Kumud, Angad, Sushen, Maind, Dwid, Sugriv, Krishparva, and Jambvan would be able to manage their entry in this city." When he thought about Ram and Lakshaman, he became more confident.

In his initial moments he was detected by a demoness. She cried, "Who are you, and what do you want? Before you die tell the details." Without getting cowed down, although he saw her terrifying form, asked about her identity first. She replied, "Deputed by Ravan, I am the manifestation of the city itself. Being on guard, nobody can enter here without my permission. Today I will end your life."

Hanuman, with an aim to create a deterrence in her mind, enlarged his body like a mountain and spoke to her, "I have a curiosity to see the groves, buildings, and royal

<sup>3</sup> A synonym of *Trikut* त्रिकूट

<sup>4</sup> Special gold called *Jambunad* is mentioned at several places in Valmiki Ramayan. It seems to refer to the place where the best quality of gold is found.

<sup>5</sup> It seems the gods were at beck and call of Ravan, and they had to keep the city lighted. That is why ever present clouds consistently produced flashes of lightning. The clouds had been used as live generators to produce power and light for the city of Lanka.

premises of this city.” She objected and forbade him to enter the city. He again submitted, “O, gentle lady! Having a view of this city I would go back.” Hearing him speaking thus, she lost her temper and slapped Hanuman heavily. Hanuman also intimidating her with his terrifying grumble, clenched his left fist, and punched on her mildly. She was not able to sustain his punch, and fell over the ground. Hanuman was compassionate on her because she was a woman. Soon she lost her ego and anxiously mentioned, “Be kind on me. I was told by Brahma that when a monkey would subdue my potential, I should take that as an indication of imminent danger to demons. Brahma’s prediction can’t be changed. Because of Sita, devil Ravan has invited the end of the demons. You are welcome in this city, and move freely to find out Sita.”

#### 5-4 Wandering Hanuman (30 / 352)

Moving ahead on the flower strewn streets, he saw closely that all the buildings were bright white. In majority of them he heard the sound of song and music. In some of them, which had mark of bolt at the entry, the windows were made of gems, instead of only gold. Some of the structures were in the shape of lotus, while others represented several different<sup>6</sup> categories found to be auspicious from *vastu* (scripture for structural orientation) (5-4-7) consideration. In some of them, demons were found to be carrying out oblation and recitation of mantra, while some others were doing their self studies, still some others were found engaged in practice of muscle flexing exercises. He noticed one hundred thousand security men on guard on the main streets. He found numerous spies moving in various appearances. The physical appearance of demons in Lanka varied from attractive to terrifying.

At a remote location, he saw another magnificent premises situated at a majestic peak of *Trikut*. Getting closer to that he found that excellently decorated with natural greeneries. Free moving animals and birds enhanced the grandeur of entry. From all sides, the rampart was surrounded by wide ditches full of white lotus. The premises reverberated with sweet musical notes. This was the mansion of Ravan, and was closely guarded by valorous demons.

#### 5-5 Hanuman disappointed (27 / 379)

The moon lit night was very impressive, and moon appeared to be invested with the auspiciousness of goddess *Lakshmi*, whose eternal abode is known in water floating lotuses, evening time ocean, and *mandrachal* on earth. The mark of deer horn (5-5-5) over moon was more distinct. He noticed moon appeared like a sovereign lion of the sky.

He hunted into several mansions where demons were found enjoying with their consorts in a varieties of ways. The presence of musical notes was almost common in all the

<sup>6</sup> (i) *Sarvato bhadra* सर्वतो भद्र type is the most auspicious having doors in all the four cardinal directions. (ii) *Vardhaman* वर्द्धमान type bestows wealth and has doors in three directions except south. (iii) *swastika* स्वस्तिक is the one which confers wealth and children has doors in three directions except east.

chambers. Despite his meticulous scouring of the mansions, he couldn't locate Sita. This made him disappointed.

### 5-6 Wandering resumed (44 / 423)

He resumed the second round of his hunting. He saw the mansion of Ravan as the gem of all the mansions. It had pictures fixed with silvers, the doors and windows were of gold beautified by the carvings of gems.

He freely leapt from one place to another. Going up to the terrace, he leapt to the house of Prahast. From there, one by one, he leapt watching their grandeur to the houses of Mahaparshv, Kumbhakarn, Vibhishan, Mahodar, Virupaksh, Vidyujijn, Viddyunmali, Vajradanshtr, Shuk, Saran, Indrajeet, Jambumali, Sumali, Rashimketu, Suryashatru, Vajrakaya, Dhumraksh, Sampathi, Vidyudrup, Bheem, Ghan, Vighan, Shuknabh, Chakr, Shath, Kapat, Hrushwkarn, Danshtr, Lomush, Yudhonmatt, Matth, Dhvajgriv, Dwijijn, Hastimukh, Karal, Pishach, Shonitaksh.

He entered the mansion of Ravan standing alone from other houses. He saw scores of demoness, demons, horses, elephants, chariots and palanquins ready to comply the command of the demon king. The demons in army contingent on duty were well built and bejeweled with *jambunad* gold. There were several secured and isolated chambers. Almost at all places he noticed the mood of gala and festivity; instrumental music as well as vocal songs with sweet melodies permeated the entire environment.

### 5-7 Ravan's palace and *pushpak viman* (17 / 440)

Ravan's brilliant white fort was set like lightning in the green wood backdrop of the surrounding marked by the presence of chirping birds. Abundance of gems and gold were used in the carvings of the windows. He saw several varieties of chambers, stores of weapons, conches, and bows. The houses were so magnificent which gave an impression as if *May-danav* had himself worked on them.

His eyes fell on *puhspak viman* which was high like clouds, and had golden appearance. It looked like assembly of peaks of mountains covered with several categories of flowers and their fragrant pollen. It appeared like chariot being carried by royal swan. The gems and gold studs made it like sky full of stars. The precious stones and metals were used to create a delighting view of earth full mountains, trees with flowers and fruits, and lakes having lotuses. Emeralds, sliver, and coral pieces were skillfully used to create the view of birds, snakes, and horses. Various postures of birds were carved out, some of them appeared like flying, while others gave an impression of their idle state. Among several scenes depicted by carving, goddess *lakshmi* holding lotus flower in her hands, being worshipped by elephants offering flowers from their trunks were most attractive.

Watching the scenes of caves and mountains used to enhance the grandeur of the *pushpak*, he was surprised. Soon his wandering spirit ebbed low when he didn't find Sita anywhere.

### 5-8 *Pushpak* revisited (8 / 448)

While standing in the centre of the house of the demon king, Hanuman again had a look at *pushpak*. Having built by celestial architect (*viswakama*) himself it was alone of its kind having no example to compare its grand aesthetic structure. When airborne, it gave an impression of another solar body passing through the sky route.

Ravan had carried out penance for a long period with a steadfast state of mind, and as a result of that he was able to possess *pushpak*. This chariot was capable of moving in all directions, be it ground or air as wished by the rider in his mind. Its structure looked like peaks of mountains covered with trees and plants. The inside of the chariot was pleasant like cool and fragrant spring.

### 5-9 Wandering inside the palace ( 73 / 521)

The inner palace was one *yojan* long and half *yojan* wide. Wandering around, Hanuman entered the most inner and private palace of Ravan. It was surrounded by guards accompanied by tusker elephants; some elephants had four tusks, and some had three tusks only. His wives and those women who had been abducted, had made a large gathering inside as if multitude marine creatures staying in sea. The grandeur and affluence inside the palace were more than that possessed by *varun*, *yam* and *kuber*.

Among several inside structures of the palace, *pushpak* stood alone. Viswakarma had built *pushpak* for the use of Brahma, but *Kuber*, by dint of his long and tough penance, obtained it from him. Ravan used his force, and captured *pushpak* from *Kuber*. Along with the statues of sheep, the pillars inside the *pushpak* were made of gold and silver. The steps and floors were made of gold and varying sizes of pieces of coral. Along with the precious stones, pink sandal wood had been beautifully blended to enhance the overall grandeur. Getting inside *pushpak*, Hanuman took the smell of several kinds of drink and food stored for serving.

He was automatically dragged to the place where Ravan was present, and that portion of the palace was most favorite of Ravan. The chamber was fragrant with the smoke of aloe, and the screen of the smoke had shielded the original brilliance of the whiteness of the building. The natural scene and sceneries of the global earth was a common view. Getting inside was so soothing, that Hanuman felt as if he was deriving the comfort from the lap of mother. The grandeur of the place was found a little superior to that of heaven of Indr. The light of the lamps was mild and widely permeating.

Thousands of beautifully dressed women were seen occupying their bed. The time was past midnight, and they were found sleeping intoxicated. Those sleeping women possessed the brilliance of bright stars, and this gave a deceptive understanding that all stars falling from heaven (meteorites) had gathered at Ravan's personal chamber. The physical effort of the night dance, appeared to have caused the unfastening of their hair locks. Some of them had lost their anklets, while others were lying with dislodged lower and upper garments. Intoxicated women, enjoyed the fragrance coming from the face of

the next woman but had a false impression of close embracing of Ravan. Dancing women had fallen over ground intoxicated such that someone had laid her head over the chest of another fellow dancer, while the feet of some other rested over the chest of someone else. Their lying position had emerged like flowers of a garland on the floor, arms joining arms, and hair joining hair. All the women were won over by Ravan, and had offered their love to him. They appeared to hail from a good family background, were beautiful, and none was ugly or disabled.

#### **5-10 Sleeping Mandodari (54 / 575)**

Hanuman saw an isolated couch having a white umbrella over it. The couch had attractive finishes with precious gems and mattresses. Several charming women had surrounded the couch with fan and *chavar* in their hands. The couch was occupied by sleeping Ravan. He was beautifully dressed and bejeweled. His two arms looked like deadly snakes. His body was smeared with red and fragrant sandal paste. He was wearing a white silk as a lower garment, and the upper portion was covered with yellow silken drape. The breathing was so vigorous as if a mighty serpent continued hissing. Sweet fragrance had permeated around Ravan. On the nearby floor of his couch, young women were found sleeping under heavy influence of liquor. Most of them had clung closely with the musical instruments they had played. Away from them, he saw another couch over which a woman of exquisite beauty was found sleeping. She was Mandodari, but he mistook her as Sita. Thinking her to be Sita, he became so much excited, that he climbed up and jumped down several times from the nearby pillars.

#### **5-11 Thoughtful Hanuman (48 / 623)**

Soon Hanuman could reason back, "I am sure, Sita, the sacred woman, can never adopt the life style of demons, and therefore my guessing this woman as Sita is wrong." He continued his search and saw several varieties of meat arranged in order of readiness. Some bowls contained meat of peacock, chicken, pig, deer and other animals mixed with curd and salt. Several varieties of drinks prepared from honey (*madira*), *sura* (from fruits), and *pushpasava* from flowers were stacked for ready use.

In the meanwhile, it occurred to him, "In the past I never raised my eyes to women, but here I am so minutely watching them. This violates the code of ethical conduct, and I am a sinner. Soon he got reflections of counter thought, "Although I have glanced minutely over women, I didn't nurse any lust or other malice against them. This suggests I am still composed with my steadfast state of mind, and I never committed any heinous or sinful act. After all, if I don't search Sita among women, where shall I found her? She has to be hunted among women."

#### **5-12 Puzzled Hanuman (25 / 648)**

Moving around, from one place to other he continued hunting her. Sadness gripped him, and he thought, "I have spent the time without any output. I am sure, when I would be back without any news of Sita, Sugriv will kill me." After a while, he got the tides of good

thought and became glad, "Sadness is a killer. I won't be able to attain my target if I yield to disappointment. I need to be energetic cheerful."

He continued his search once again, and he passed through several other groups of women of *nag* dynasty who have been won over by the demon king. Sita was not seen anywhere. Again the despondency seized him, and he guessed, "Being a righteous woman, she must have rejected the demons style of life and their solicitations. Consequently, demons must have eliminated Sita by now. My journey to like is now futile."

### 5-13 Hanuman in dual mind (69 / 717)

He again vigorously searched her leaping from place to another. His pessimism again rose high, "Sampathi had indicated her to be here, but there is no trace of her. How can I find her. It seems while being abducted she leaped down on way and lost her life. Possibility is of her slipped down to sea also. Else, she could have been devoured by Ravan's other demoness wives. If I go to Kishkindha with negative news, Ram would end his life. In grief Lakshaman, Bharat, and thus all brothers would end their life. Sugriv would never bear the shock of losing Ram. He would end his life. His wife, Ruma would follow him. Tara also won't live any more. Loss of parents would lead Angad also to suicide."

Foreseeing the chain of actions of losing lives, Hanuman rethought, "I won't go back. I would stay here as an ascetic. Better I would enter fire and sacrifice my life than cause others to lose their lives."

In the next turn of thoughts, he planned, "to kill Ravan, or else take him captive to Ram." He again became cheerful and thought of beginning the search in the nearby grove, *ashok vatika* which was surrounded by another ring of forest. He guessed and got alarmed of strict security around *ashok vatika*.

### 5-14 Hanuman in *ashok vatika* (52 / 769)

Jumping down from the palace of Ravan, he scaled up the fencing of *ahsok vatika*. Leaping inside down of the magnificent grove he was pleased by the natural resources. Birds and deer created scene of visual delight. Fruit and flower bearing trees, dancing peacocks gave him lot of pleasure. He found several small and large groves surrounding several buildings. Due to his inherent nature, he shook several of the fruit and flower laden trees. Some of the flowers fell down by movement of his tail. When those trees lost their flowers and fruits, birds deserted them for another trees. Wandering ahead, he found lakes with banks made of gems and sand bed strewn with coral pieces. At a distant place, a large mountain with several peaks and a stream descending down were seen. Sandal and other plants of fragrance were found at regular intervals. He thought, "Getting impressed by the natural of birds, flowers, trees, lakes and streams Sita would be visiting them to ventilate her grief of separation from Ram."

He spotted a large *ashok* tree full of leaves and flowers. He climbed up that tree with an aim to have a panoramic view of a larger area.

### 5-15 Sita spotted (54 / 823)

When Hanuman continued watching from that majestic *ashok* tree, he located rows of other *ashok* trees thousands in number. Among those trees, some shined like gold, some had brilliance of fire, while others looked dark green. Flower laden *ashok* trees had the tips of the branches touching the ground. The groves were as beautiful as *nandanvan* of heaven, and *chaitrarath* of *kuber*. The flower trees and plants (*punag*, *chitvan*, and *champa*) of larger girth were common, and they caused sweet fragrance all around.

His eyes, soon found a circular building standing over thousands of pillars. The steps and floors were made of gems and gold was used to beautify the pillars. Next to this, his attention caught a woman surrounded by demoness. She looked like a glowing fire amidst smoke. She was draped in yellow silken sari, appeared to be used for long. In her lean and thin constitution, her face had become pale as if *rohini* (रोहिणी asterism) was afflicted by mars (मंगल ) 5-15-22. Like a deer she was found to be trapped by hounds. Single matted lock of hair was as if a snake hanged down over her back. She had a rare beauty beating that of *rati*, the consort of cupid.

He recalled what Ram had depicted about her. She was found to be with only those jewels which Ram had indicated. She had earrings (like canine teeth), and bracelets of gems. The jewels which she had dropped to monkeys at *rishyamuk* were absent. The cloth containing those dropped jewels was identical to her yellow sari.

Her first hand appearance caused Hanuman to imagine, as if she resembled, "hazy memory, fallen treasure (*ridhi*), broken faith, shattered hope, partial accomplishment (*sidhi*), shaky wit, and falsely defamed glory. Her physical state represented a dormant intellect shorn of practice, and words bereft of syntax and grammar." Making such reflections, Hanuman could identify her, "She is that Sita for whom Ram suffered immensely and passed through several stages of compassion for a woman, mercy for a dependent, shock of separation, and love for a beloved wife."

Hanuman became glad when he was confirmed of all her eligibilities deserving to become the consort of Ram.

### 5-16 Her afflictions grieved Hanuman (32 / 858)

Although sita appeared sorrowful, still she betrayed a sort of composed mind. Hanuman found her matching with the qualities of Ram. He continued pondering, "It was for this Sita, that Ram killed Vali, Kabandh, Khar, Dushan, Trirshira (with fourteen thousand demons), and Viradh. She is infallible in observing her chastity. Rightly so, because of being daughter of Janak, king of Mithila. Her advent took place when she appeared from the earth smeared with clay while the tip of the ploughshare hit the ground. She became daughter in law of great king Dasarath. For sake of her unflinching love in Ram, she



discarded the royal luxuries and joined him in his forest banishment. She always relished the food of roots and fruits.”

He thought, “It is due to her abiding affection with Ram, that despite immense torture of Ravan she is still alive. She neither looks to demoness nor to the fruit bearing trees, rather she is steadfast in contemplation of Ram. Her tolerance is like that of earth, and possessed of rare beauty and lotus eyes, she is alive anticipating re-union with Ram. Alas, although protected by Ram and Lakshaman, the demon king caused so much of miseries on her. For her sake I crossed the sea, and it would be still appropriate if Ram destroys the entire globe to redeem her. *Ashok* has bent down from flower loads as if mourning for pitiable plight of Sita. *Shishir* ended, and spring has set in (5-16-31). The moon of spring is although cool, but for her it is painful like hot sun.”

### 5-17 Cheerful Hanuman (32 / 890)

For Hanuman, it was second night (5-17-1) in Lanka. The moon was substantially up in the sky and its cool light helped him in looking at Sita. While looking at those demoness, who surrounded her, he had a terrifying view, “Some of them were one eyed, some had only one ear, some had ear large enough to cover the whole body, some had ears like erect spikes. Some had nose fixed on forehead, some had blanket of her own hair, some had head in abdomen (like Kabandh). Their mouth resembled to several wild animals, viz., boar, buffalo, goat, and jackal. Some were equipped with axe and pestle, while others had a thick coat of flesh and blood over their body.”

Sita occupied the root of one of the *ashok* trees, while demoness sat in a ring around her. Becoming sure of locating Sita, he became glad and cheerful and her eyes were full of cool tears. Mentally he bowed his head to Ram and Lakshaman and stayed watching from the tree.

### 5-18 Ravan at *ashok vatika* (32 / 922)

The night passed into its last quarter. Lanka woke up for routine *ved path* (recitation of scriptures) in the dwelling units of *brahm-rakshasa* who offered sacrifices in fire. Ravan was awakened with playing of auspicious musical instruments. Waking up, he thought about Sita, and getting dressed up, moved to *ashok vatika*. Enjoying the natural pleasure of the royal park, dotted with several lakes and aviary zoos, he entered the grove where Sita was staying. Hundreds of beautiful wives accompanied him. He was served with fans, golden lamp, and other royal provisions of water pots, seating furniture, and sweet drinks.

Hanuman heard the sweet notes of anklets of those women and also saw bright burning sticks leading the contingent moving with Ravan. The dress of Ravan was milky white having borders of pearls. He looked intoxicated and entered the zone called *pramada van* (5-18-27) of *ashok vatika*. Although Hanuman had earlier seen him in his palace, he was very much impressed by his physique and royal style. To have closer look at him, Hanuman descended to a lower branch of the tree he had earlier occupied.

### 5-19 Sorrowful Sita (22 / 944)

When Sita noticed Ravan's arrival, she trembled like banana leaves. Out of fear and modesty, she covered her abdomen with thighs, and breast with arms. She was sitting on the ground and looked like a fallen branch of a tree. She was born and wedded in royal family, but her Lanka detention had subdued her facial radiance and she appeared sorrowfully pale. Firm in her resolve, riding the mental chariot, she always retained oneness of her identity with Ram. She was grieved in separation as *rohini* is afflicted by *ketu* (5-19-9). She resembled like a freshly broken lotus thrown over ground.

### 5-20 Ravan's pursuance (36 / 980)

Ravan tried to impress upon her, "Abducting women is the accepted practice of demons. I brought you through abduction, but I would never force my intention upon you until you wish to come around with me. You shouldn't resort to fast, sleeping over ground, and remain in dirty cloths. Once you accept my proposal you will never find anything lacking. You are the single creation of Brahama, and after you he didn't produce any woman of your rare beauty. Your each and every organ is so beautiful that when I look at any one of them, I can't shift my gaze to the other one. All beautiful women of my palace will stand your waitress as you will be the single empress of my kingdom. The gems brought by me from various expeditions shall be in your possession. I promise to offer the best of states of my kingdom to your father *Janak*, if you so wish me to do. An ascetic Ram wouldn't be able to get an access to securely located Lanka. I wonder he would be found alive. This *ashok vatika* is so secured that barring me, no other creature despite their capability to change their form readily, would find entry here. I pray you to dress up yourself to your satisfaction and come with me. Wastage of further time is not going to help you."

### 5-21 Sita warned Ravan (34 / 1014)

Hearing Ravan's solicitations, Sita was pained to the core of her heart. Using a blade of grass as screen and divider between her and Ravan, she spoke mildly, "As you protect your own wives, you need to take care of the chastity of a woman who is wedded to other person. Your lust to other's wife will cause your end. It seems Lanka is devoid of sensible persons who could counsel you on code of ethics (*dharm* of a married life). Even if ethical persons are in Lanka, it seems, you don't bother to heed their words. When a sinner like you is eliminated, people rejoice, and same will happen in your case."

She further reminded him, "The elimination of demons' contingent from *Janasthan* gave you enough indication of the potential of Ram. Afraid to face him, you stole me away in his absence. The mighty shafts of Ram and Lakshaman will end you with your demons' Lanka, as the sun rays dry up the ditches. As *trivikram bhagwan* through striding three steps dispossessed the demons of their dominance and retrieved the splendor to gods, my lord Ram will redeem me from you. If you wish to enjoy a safer life, I advise you to surrender me to Ram, and mend your relations with him."

### 5-22 Ravan's ultimatum (46 / 1060)

Hearing Sita's contemptible words, Ravan spoke to her, "My sweet words have failed to win your heart. I had been from sweet to sweeter to you, but contrarily you became from harsh to harsher to me. Even if you are harsher, my fond desire to own you doesn't allow me to take extreme action against you. I remind you, still you are left with two more months (5-22-8) of the grace period indicated earlier to you, and if you don't comply to my command, the pieces of your body will be served by my cooks in delicious dishes."

Ravan's threat grieved the daughters of *gandharva* and gods and they tried to console Sita through their quiet physical indications. Encouraged by their silent support, Sita spoke to Ravan, "I am wife of righteous Ram, and daughter-in-law of Dasarath. Your tongue should have fallen down before uttering such dirty words against me. Your willful behavior will be rigorously responded when you will face Ram. You are such a shameless fellow, that I was stolen away after deceitfully cajoling my husband away from me, and you take this as your valorous performance. If you were really valorous why didn't you face him in the forest. Using the potency of my penance I could have burnt you to ashes, but neither I have permission of Ram, nor I want to waste my power."

Ravan got angry, his tongue flashed like fire, and eyes had become red. Swinging crown over his head made him taller. His body was anointed with sandal, and was bearing varieties of chains of gems and armlets of gold. His apparel was red with red flower garland around his neck. Black piece of cloth draped around his waist looked as serpent *Vasuki* coiled over *mandarachal* during churning of ocean. His body was mountainous and two arms looked like peaks of *mandarachal*. The red and yellow earrings, hued as rising sun, appeared as if *ashok trees* had enhanced the splendor of hilly terrain. Thus dressed, he looked like manifestation of spring, but the overall impression was that of a decorated altar made ready for a victim of capital punishment.

Hissing like a serpent, he addressed the demonesses on guard who had terrifying features. Some of them had one eye, some had one ear, some had ear as large to cover the full body, some had ear of either cow or elephant, and some had no ear. They had legs of configurations of animals, viz., elephant, cow, and horse. Some had no nose, while mouths of some of them looked like lion, boar, and cow. Some had large tongue and nails. He asked them, "Using tactical skills of *sam* (praise), *dan* (gift), *bhed* (confusion), and *dand* (punishment) try to bring her around." After this, when he began roaring again with his gaze fixed at Sita, two of his wives, Mandodari and Dhanyamalini came to him and embraced him closely. They tried to divert his attention from Sita, "This woman, of ill luck is not destined to enjoy the royal luxuries." Surrounded by his wives Ravan went back to his palace.

### 5-23 Demonesses' efforts (19 / 1079)

After the departure of Ravan, demonesses made their efforts to reason around Sita to accept the demon king as her husband. One of them, called *Ekjata* spoke, "Listen, O,

Sita! *Pulastya* is the fourth among six<sup>7</sup> of the *prajapati* (primordial forefathers of human race). His son is *Vishrava*, who got Ravan<sup>8</sup> as his son. You know Ravan is the king of demons and you should marry him.”

Thereafter, another demoness having grey eyes of a cat, called by the name *Harijata* tried to convince Sita, “Ravan has defeated *Indr* and other thirty three gods (12 *aditya*, 8 *vasu*, 11 *rudr*, and 2 *aswinikumar*). You are lucky to have him as your husband. He is ready to desert his loveliest among queens, Mandodari for your sake.”

*Vikata*, another demoness, told her, “Ravan has defeated all *gandharv*, *nag* and demons of the world. It is your ill luck that you reject him.”

Yet another among them, named *Durmukhi*, spoke to Sita, “Ravan is such a formidable personality that in his presence, sun becomes cool, trees offer flowers, mountains create springs, and clouds bring shower. He is king of demons, and you should readily agree to become his wife, otherwise you will lose your life.”

#### 5-24 Demonesses’ threats (47 / 1126)

Those demonesses gathered around her and renewed their threat, “Your husband is a human being, he is poor and exiled, why do you still like him? The demon king would provide you all the royal facilities, and it your ill luck and you have lost your balance.”

Sita replied to them, “I love my poor husband, and despite all adversities I won’t desert him in my life.” Renewing her loyalty to Ram, gem of *Ikshavaku* dynasty, she cited several exemplary eternal couples, “*Sachi* and *Indr*, *Arundhati* and *Vashishath*, *Rohini* and *Chandma*, *Lopmudra* and *Agastya*, *Sukanya* and *Chyavan*, *Savitri* and *Satyavan*, *Srimati* and *Kapil*, *Madyant* and *Saudas*, *Keshini* and *Sagar*, *Damayanti* (daughter of *Bheem*) and *Nal* (king of *Nishadh*).”

Sita’s firm reply enraged the demonesses once again and they began intimidating her in many ways. Sita, leaving that tree, shifted to the tree of Hanuman and took her seat near the root. The demonesses followed her there also and made a ring around her. *Vinata*, one of the most terrifying in appearance, spoke to Sita, “Extreme of everything is bad. You have demonstrated enough loyalty to your human husband. You should now accept the demon king and make your life pleasant. Like *Swaha* wife of *Agni*, and *Sachi* wife of *Indr*, you will remain endearing to Ravan. If you don’t listen to our words, we will soon devour you. ”

One after another, viz., *Vikata*, *Chandodari*, *Praghasa*, *Ajamukhi*, *Surpnakha* threatened her, “We will intimate Ravan that you died, and therefore, we ate her body. We will now arrange wine, because eating flesh enhances the taste of wine. Thereafter we will present dance in front of goddess *Nikumbhila*.”

<sup>7</sup> *Marichi*, *Atri*, *Angira*, *Pulastya*, and *Kratu*

<sup>8</sup> Ravan literally means the one who makes weep his enemies.

**5-25 Wailing Sita (20 / 1146)**

Terrified by the demonesses she lost her balance and began weeping with tearful eyes, "You do what you like. You eat me alive, but I would never desert my husband, Ram." Wailing thus, she got up and took support of a branch of the *ashok* tree. Suddenly she fell in fit over the ground like stem of a banana plant. She wailed crying, "Alas! Ram, Lakshaman, my mothers-in-law Kauslya and Sumitra. The destiny is so strong, that despite all my unbearable agonies, I am not able to discard my life. I have been badly trapped by these evil demonesses."

**5-26 Sita sought to end life (49 / 1195)**

She continued her wailing and recalling past events decided to end her life. She mentioned loudly, "Ravan used Mareech to deceive Ram and in his absence abducted me. My husband killed Viradh, and how could he wait so long! Sure, he doesn't have idea of my location. Jatayu, although old fought Ravan well, but, alas ! he was killed by the devil demon. Otherwise, Jatayu could have intimated about me. Ram can't be deterred by sea, if he knew about my location. His mighty shafts are capable of drying the sea either. I wonder whether Ravan managed to kill both the brothers. I am so ill luck that my life force doesn't cooperate me, and I am not able to discard my body. I am sure, the way I am crying today, the demonesses of Lanka would soon begin crying and wailing when the demons would be killed by Ram. Being separated from Ram, I am in horrible clutch of Ravan, and I must take initiatives to end my life."

**5-27 Trijata's dream (54 / 1249)**

Demonesses became angry over Sita's expression. Some of them went to intimate Ravan about her, while others renewed their torturous threat to Sita. In the meanwhile, Trijata, an old demoness had just got up from night's sleep. She forbade the other demoness, "Don't repeat any more threat to Sita", and narrated her dream in detail to them, "Ram clad in white dress, having white flower garland around his neck, riding a white chariot made of white tusks being carried by one thousand horses has arrived by sky route with his brother Lakshaman. I saw Sita over a white peak of a mountain surrounded by sea. Ram met her there as if sun has met its brilliance. Later I also saw him with Lakshaman mounting an elephant having four tusks. They proceeded towards Sita staying over the white peak mountain. Ram held her by hand and she joined him on the elephant. From there Sita leapt up in the sky, and wiped the face of sun and moon. Thereafter the elephant carrying them arrived and stood over Lanka. I also saw that Ram dressed in white cloths, wearing white flower garland, with Lakshaman and Sita have arrived here in a chariot being pulled by eight white oxen. Another scene following this demonstrated all three (Ram, Lakshaman and Sita) riding radiant *pushpak viman* moving northwards. Thus I had holy view of Ram (equivalent to Vishnu), Lakshaman and Sita."

Mentioning the terrifying dream about Ravan she spoke, "Ravan, in shaven head, bathed in oil, wearing red cloths and garland of *karveer* flower, had fallen down from

*pushpak*. A black woman dragged him. Again, in another scene, he was seen in red dress with red flower garland, mounting a chariot pulled by asses. He drank oil, laughed, and danced like mad persons. He was then seen riding an ass and moving towards south. I saw him falling from the ass with his down towards ground. Thereafter, he moved naked, shouting evil words and entered a filthy pond full of excreta. Later, I saw him moving south and entered a pond without mud, but a black woman smeared with mud, dressed in red cloth, dragged him southward through the snooze around his neck. His brother Kumbhakarn, and Indrajeet along with other sons of Ravan were seen shaven head, and bathed in oil. Ravan rode a boar, Indrajeet rode a crocodile, while Kumbhakarn had mounted a camel.

Trijata further detailing her dream spoke to them, "In Lanka, only Vibhishan bearing white cloth, white flower garland, smearing white sandal was seen under a white umbrella. He was greeted with sweet sound of conch, drum and other musical instruments. Along with his four ministers he was seen in sky riding an elephant of four tusks. The other demons of Lanka were seen bearing red cloth, red garlands and drinking oil. The city of Lanka with horses, elephants and chariots and broken gates was seen submerged in sea."

Breaking the bad dreams, Trijata mentioned, "I saw a mighty monkey has burnt Lanka to ashes. The demonesses are intoxicated and drinking oil they created loud laugheers. Kumbhakarn with other demons in red cloth have entered a pond of dung."

Trijata, thereafter, advised the demonesses, "You should beg for mercy from Sitio. She is very compassionate and in one salutation she will pardon all of you. If you please her she can protect you safe from the impending calamity of Lanka. Her present state of sorrow is transitory and would soon be over like shade falling over moon during eclipse (5-27-48). I see good omens around her. Her left eye, left arm, and left thigh are seen twitching. The birds over the tree, opposite her tree, are creating sweet melody as if they stand to auspiciouss welcome."

Hearing all this from the mouth of Trijata, Sita assured those demonesses full safety if the forebodings come true.

### **5-28 Sita intent to self immolate (19 / 1268)**

Her state of grief of separation from Ram was further compounded by the repeated threat of devil demonesses. She lamented over the infallible decree of fate, "It was ill luck that I forced upon two brothers to fetch that illusory deer. It seems the demon disguised as deer had killed both the brothers. So far in this life, whatever penance and sacred performances I have done, nothing helped in reaping auspiciousness. I am being tortured by devils and the period of two months seems to be too short for Ram to arrive here. I may not be able to sustain the torture anymore, and I should either take deadly poison or use some weapon to end my life. But none would facilitate the provision of either of these two elements. "

Lastly she took the hair lock in her hand and thought of using that to help fasten her throat tightly (5-28-17) to end her life. With this intention when she stood up holding one of the branches of the tree, she noticed several auspicious omens indicating end of her sorrow and grief.

### 5-29 Auspicious omens of Sita (8 / 1276)

A wealthy person is attended by host of servants, similarly several auspicious indications frequented over her vital organs. The throbbing of left eye brow was so vigorous as if a lotus was shaken by fish. Her left arm, and left thigh suddenly twitched to confirm the auspicious forthcoming happenings. As she stood below that tree, her silken wrapper (*sari*) slightly slipped down indicating further auspiciousness. Occurrences of these good omens caused rejuvenating pleasure in her heart.

### 5-30 Contemplative Hanuman (44 / 1320)

By now Hanuman was well acquainted with the state of sorrow of Sita, torture by demonesses, and dreams of Trijata. He had also witnessed the behavior of Ravan with Sita.

Having them in mind, he thought of consoling Sita, "Among several thousands and millions of monkeys, I am alone to get success in locating Sita, and have collected enough details of Lanka and Ravan. She had never earlier been put to such terrifying living conditions. In presence of these devils, how could I meet and talk to her. Unless I talk to her what message shall I carry for Ram. I have to make all efforts to talk to her before end of tonight or otherwise she might end her life. What language should I use? If disguised as a brhamin, I speak in Sanskrit, she might take me as agent of Ravan. If I appear as a monkey and talk to her like a human being, she might further be scared for she have been constantly terrified by demonesses so far. She might begin crying as if Ravan has reappeared before her, and her cry would invite the gathering of demonesses. Surrounded by them I might have to face encounter and there would arise a situation when I might have to fight the selected guards and warrior demons of Lanka. The outcome of fighting with demons could be uncertain with several probabilities: (i) if I win, but they might kill Sita, (ii) If I lose, I might languish here as a prisoner."

Contemplating on all pros and cons, he thought of reciting Ram's glory to her from the hide out over the tree, expecting this would help him in winning her confidence.

### 5-31 Hanuman's initiative (19 / 1339)

Hanuman recited in an audible sweet voice, "Dasarath is a renowned king in the dynasty of *Ikshvaku*. He is known for his penance, sacrifices, compassion, and valorous records. Ram is his eldest son who is an accomplished archer and is endowed with handsome personality. In order to honour the words of his aged father, Ram came to stay in forest with his brother Lakshman and wife Sita. He killed scores of devil demons including the most notorious ones Khar and Dushan of Janasthan. To settle scores with Ram, Ravan stole away his wife in his absence while he was cajoled away by another demon



Mareech disguised as an illusory deer. To help facilitate redeem Sita from Ravan, Ram forged friendship with Sugriv, a monkey, when he arrived in *Matang van* (forest) searching Sita. Sugriv has been crowned as king of monkeys, after killing of Vali by Ram. On the initiative of Sugriv, monkeys have been sent in all quarters to locate Sita. I am also one of them, and as advised by *Sampathi* (vulture brother of *Jatayu*), crossed one hundred *yojan* of sea and reached in Lanka. Here, I find Sita identical to the mental picture illustrated by Ram, before I had left for this mission.”

Saying thus Hanuman became quiet. Sita, highly impressed by the recitation, removed her curly and lustrous hair fallen over her face, and began gazing carefully, up and down, in all directions. Lo and behold! her vision stopped over a brilliant eyed monkey, hiding behind leaves perched on one of the branches.

### 5-32 Contemplative Sita (14 / 1353)

In first reaction, she got surprised to see a monkey who was having a large and terrifying body. Scared, she had a swoon, and when she regained normalcy she sighed, “Hey Ram, Hey Ram, Hey Lakshaman.”

In fear, while she was weeping, she saw the monkey coming with humility towards her and taking his seat near her. She thought, “This may be a dream, but the dream (5-32-9) of monkey is considered to indicate bad omen.”

In anxiety, she offered prayer for the well being of Ram, Lakshaman and his father Janak. Further she thought, “How can I have a dream, for I have never<sup>9</sup> slept (5-32-10) after separation from Ram, and continue reflecting on Ram only.”

She was puzzled, and not able to believe her eyes. To ward off the confusion she prayed *Brihaspati*, *Indr*, *Brahma* and *agni* (fire god) and wished for the truth in the words of the monkey.

### 5-33 Hanuman initiated dialogue (31 / 1384)

Hanuman, having coral coloured face, climbed down the *ashok* tree, and coming close to her submitted softly, “Who are you, standing by the branch of *ashok*, and why do you continue weeping? Are you one of gods, demons, *nag*, *gandharva*, *yaksh*, *kinnar*, *rudr*, *marudgan*, or *vasu*? Are you rohini wife of moon and have descended on earth?, or else, are you Arundhati ? Does your weeping due to loss of some family members? Since you stand over ground, I doubt taking you as one of gods. Your physique suggests you to be one of the descendants of a royal family. If you are Sita, abducted by Ravan from Janasthan, I wish all auspiciousness upon you. From outer appearance of a mendicant immersed in sorrow, I assume you are great wife of Ram.”

<sup>9</sup> Sita never slept after she left *panchvati* (5-32-10).



Sita, highly impressed by the recitation of glory of Ram, spoke to him, “I am Sita, wife of Ram, daughter-in-law of Dasarath, and daughter of Janak. I with Ram enjoyed royal life at *Ayodhya* for twelve<sup>10</sup> years after our marriage. In the thirteenth year, king Dasarath, on recommendation of his *guru*, Vashishath, made all preparations to crown Ram as successor Prince. Before coronation could take place, Queen Kaikeyi, co-wife of Dasarath, claimed two boons pending due with the king Dasarath. She asked for exile of Ram to forest, and crown for her son, Bharat. Ram honored his father, Dasarath’s words and proceeded to forest entrusting me to his mother. I can’t stay without him even in heaven, and therefore, proceeded to forest preceding his movement. Ram’s brother, Lakshaman, also joined him while leaving for forest. Being true to the words, we entered the forest which we had never seen earlier. Devil demon, Ravan, abducted me, the wife of splendorous Ram from the forest. The demon has granted me life for two months, and on lapse of this period I have to end my life.”

### 5-34 Skeptical Sita (40 / 1424)

Hearing grief stricken words of Sita, Hanuman spoke to her, “I am a messenger of Ram. I am here on his command to find out your location and well being. Since separation he is equally grief stricken. Lakshaman has also offered his respectful salutation to your lotus feet.”

When Sita heard the names of Ram and Lakshaman, she became excited and mentioned, “The old saying appears to be true; one who holds life may get pleasure after lapse of hundreds of years.”

Both, Hanuman and Sita, enjoyed their chance meeting. They continued their conversation, and in this process Hanuman’s initiative of getting closer and closer to Sita raised an element of doubt in her mind, “This monkey is Ravan himself. I have seen his deceptive form of an ascetic in Janasthan. Now, he has come in the form of monkey.” Sita, gripped by fresh spell of despair, sat over ground. She was so much fearful and afraid of Ravan, that when Hanuman offered his salutation on her feet, she couldn’t look towards him.

Observing Hanuman’s continued salutation to her she expressed her feeling, “If you are Ravan, in a new disguise, your ill intention will not yield benefits to you at all. I presume you are the same Ravan who was in Janasthan in the deceitful guise of an ascetic. You are capable of assuming any form as per your wish, and you are again here to torture me. But I doubt my thinking, and it seems I am wrong, because I feel inner pleasant excitement when I see you. O, excellent monkey ! If you are really a messenger of Ram, continue reciting his glory, for I derive immense solace on hearing about him. I am really fortunate to meet a monkey who narrates Ram’s glory. But I again doubt and take this entire development as a dream or my mental hallucination. Reflecting for a while, again I see in reality a monkey before me, so this can’t be a dream. Recalling past events, I am

<sup>10</sup> Sita stayed for 12 yrs (5-33-17) after marriage at Ayodhya, and in the 13 th year (5-33-18) she departed to forest. Refer also *Aranya kand* (3-47-4 / 5).

sure you are Ravan who has reappeared in a new guise with the sole intention of deceiving me again.”

When Sita became quiet, Hanuman spoke to her, “Ram has all the attributes learnt to be possessed by *kuber*, *chandrama*, *Vishnu*, *Brihaspati*, and *Kamdev*. He would soon kill devil Ravan, and redeem you back. I convey his and Lakshaman’s message to you seeking your well being. It gives me utmost satisfaction to see you alive. I am Hanuman, advisor of Sugriv, king of mighty monkeys. Both Sugriv and Lakshaman, keep on discussing about you. You should discard your doubts about my being Ravan himself. Trust me, I am messenger of Ram, and crossing vast sea had entered Lanka keeping my foot over the head of Ravan (5-34-39).”

### 5-35 Winning Sita’s confidence (90 / 1514)

To reassure herself, Sita asked Hanuman, “If you are a true messenger, tell me the special features of Ram and Lakshaman. How did you know them, and how did Sugriv become his friend ?”

Hanuman was glad to hear her queries. He submitted, “I am fortunate to recite Ram’s glory again and again. Ram is full of divine qualities. He shines like sun, his talent is that of *Brihaspati*, his glories are identical to *Indr*, and he is protector of all the beings. He is righteous, and honors the four-fold<sup>11</sup> social structure ( चतुर्वर्ण्य 5-35-11) of the society. He has abiding qualities of adherence to moral conducts and helping the righteous beings. He is well versed in divine knowledge contained in all the Vedas and religious scriptures. His body is well built: radiant moon face, wide shoulder, trunk arm, conch neck, bluish hued complexion, and melodious voice. His voice, gait, and navel are stable and deep. Three folds of his neck and abdomen are attractive. The sole, palm, eye corners, and nail have reddish reflections. Four horizontal parallel lines run across the forehead and the root of thumb. He is four cubit<sup>12</sup> tall (5-35-18). There are fourteen twin<sup>13</sup> limbs and each unit of the pair is identical. Ten of his organs, eyes, face, mouth, tongue, lips, chest, nails, hand and feet are charming like lotus. Both the brothers, Ram and Lakshaman are handsome except their complexion. Lakshaman is fair and golden bright, where as Ram is pleasing blue hued.”

Hanuman continued his narration about Sugriv, “While searching you with great anxiousness, they arrived at the foot of *rishyamuk* mountain. Both of them are archers carrying bow and quiver, and they remain in an ascetic’s dress. Driven out by his elder brother, Sugriv had taken a shelter at *rishyamuk*. Seeing both the brothers, Sugriv was scared, thinking them to be agent of his elder brother, Vali. He sent me to them to confirm their identity. When I was sure of their identity, I carried both of them on my

<sup>11</sup> The four-fold structure of the social order चतुर्वर्ण्य is distinctly depicted in valmiki ramayan (5-35-11).

<sup>12</sup> Cubit is unit used to measure length, and is equal to length of forearm from elbow to tip of middle finger (approximately 45 cm).

<sup>13</sup> Hand, leg, eye, ear, eyebrow, nostril, lip, elbow, wrist, knee, loin, chest, thigh, and testicle.

shoulders and brought to Sugriv. They learnt about the plight of Sugriv that he was dispossessed of his wife and kingdom forcefully by his elder brother Vali. Ram pledged to kill Vali and restore his royal possession. Lakshaman described about your abduction by devil Ravan, and Sugriv accordingly committed to find you out with the help of his monkey army. Sugriv had ornaments in his possession dropped down by you while being carried away by Ravan. When you dropped those ornaments before us on mountain top, they fell scattered, and we noticed when they stuck the ground with ringing sound. Picking them up, I collected them together, and had handed over to Sugriv. Finding them relevant for Ram, Sugriv showed those ornaments, and having seen them Ram suffered several spells of swoon. We assured him our all help. The agony of your separation keeps him awake, concerned and immersed in your thought. In your absence, he never enjoyed the pleasure of scenic spots of forests, mountains and rivers. When he regained normalcy, with Sugriv he went to *Kishkindha*. I had also accompanied them, while they visited challenging Vali, and having killed him, Ram anointed Sugriv the king of monkeys and bears. In your search, Sugriv dispatched scores of monkeys in all directions. About one third of the monkeys lead by Angad, son of Vali, had been assigned south. I am also a member of that south team. Searching dense forests, caves and mountains, rivers and cities we spent our assigned reporting period fixed by Sugriv. We were afraid of our life if we went back with no news. We decided to fast and end our life. Angad recalled loudly the events following your abduction and sacrifice of Jatayu. Sampathi, the elder brother of Jatayu, was around there, and he happened to hear Angad mentioning about the death of Jatayu. He interfered and told us about your presence in fort of Lanka. Knowing about your location, we became excited and soon arrived at the sea shore. We were depressed again to see the vastness of sea, but I crossed it successfully and searching you tonight all over in the forts and groves have fortunately identified you. I assure you now, that on hearing about your location, soon Ram will arrive to eliminate the demons and recover you back. You trust me, I am Hanuman, a messenger of Ram sent by Sugriv. My father is mighty monkey Kesari who lived on *malyavan* mountain. He visited once *gokarn*, and on the behest of sages of that sacred pilgrim place, he killed a demon called Shambhadan. I am born from the mental resolve of *vayu* god, and although I am originally a monkey, I am capable of assuming any form as the situation demands.”

Sita felt assured about his being a messenger of Ram. Her pale and drooped face shone with fresh brightness, while her eyes welled up tears of joy.

### 5-36 Souvenir to Sita (47 / 1561)

Assessing the rise of confidence in Sita, Hanuman offered her the signet ring inscribed with the name of Ram and mentioned, “Ram gave it to me as a souvenir for you helping to win your confidence.”

Holding the signet ring, Sita was extremely pleased and felt as if she had met her fond husband. She praised Hanuman, “You are excellent in your skill, strength and intelligence. Crossing one hundred *yojan* wide sea like a foot print of a cow’s hoof, you

entered Lanka treading under your feet all the nooks and corners of this city of devil demons. I see you well composed, and fully confident, for you never appear to be bothered about Ravan."

She further expressed, "Meeting a messenger of Ram, I must confide in you, and continue the conversation further. I am delighted to learn about the wellbeing of Ram and Lakshman. I imagine, they must have been getting the news of Kauslya, Sumitra and Bharat. Ram is capable of punishing gods, and I wonder why didn't he dry up sea to straighten his way to me. Is he now able to expand his friends' circle? He is fit for royal facilities, has the exile created sense of laziness and despair in him? Does he make efforts to get me back?, or else, my destined period of peril does not seem to be over. Does he suffer from some affliction? Does he remember to retrieve me? Will Sugriva come here with his monkey army to kill demons using their sharp nails and tooth and liberate me from them? Would Lakshman, for my sake, shower his deadly shafts over the demons? Shall I be able to witness the elimination of Ravan along with his kith and kin? In a dry pond, lotus withers out, is it so that Ram has also withered out in my absence? While coming to forest on foot, he did never had any worry; does he, in my absence, now hold courage?"

Saying thus, Sita became quiet. Hanuman with folded palms submitted to her, "Ram does not know about your location. On my return from here, he will come to know about you. Using his infallible arrows, he will bridge the wide sea. He will clean sweep this city of demons. *Mandarchal, Vindhya, Malaya, Meru* and other mountains with roots and fruits are our favorite resort. I swear on their name, that soon you will be able to have a glimpse of Ram's radiant face. None from the family of Raghu eat meat<sup>14</sup> or take liquor, how does Ram will resort to that (5-36-41)? Keeping fast for four fifth of the period, he takes some roots and fruits in the fifth period. His mind is constantly immersed contemplating about you. Whenever a natural lovely scene is in his sight, he sighs deeply and remembers you loudly, "Sita!, O, Sita!." He is so much concerned about you, that it hardly allows him to go into slumber."

Hearing Hanuman speaking about Ram, Sita got rid of her sorrow of separation. Soon she was caught by the thought of state of grief gripping Ram. She again fell sad, and was ensnared to despair, as if a night enjoys partly the moon light, and partly afflicted by the shadow of dense dark cloud in sky.

### 5-37 Sita's refusal (68 / 1629)

Sita spoke to Hanuman, "Your information about the state of grief to Ram is like poisonous nectar for me. Nobody can prevail upon time and destiny. Ram, Lakshman and me are the burning examples. I wonder, when shall my husband kill Ravan, destroy

<sup>14</sup> At several places in Arany kand, some commentators have done erroneous translation of the Valmiki's Sanskrit verses indicating Ram taking meat. This shlok (5-36-41) is distinct in its declaration that none from the Raghu family, including Ram had been ever a meat eater.

Lanka with demons, and see my face ? My grace life<sup>15</sup> as decreed by Ravan (5-37-7 / 8) is limited to end of one year. The current period is the tenth month, leaving only two more balance months during which all actions have to be performed to liberate me. Vibhishan, brother of Ravan, sincerely advised Ravan to return me back to my husband Ram, but Ravan didn't heed to his words. The eldest daughter of Vibhishan is Kala कला, and she had reported all such things to me. There is another elderly demon, Avindhya, respected by Ravan for his learning, conduct and performances. He also advised Ravan to return me back respectfully to Ram otherwise demons would be eliminated, but Ravan had ignored his advice also. I know his potential who alone killed fourteen thousand demons. He is like sun whose shafts are the radiant rays to destroy demons as water is dried up the sun rays."

When Sita grew extremely emotional with tears streaming down her cheeks, Hanuman spoke to her, "You should have patience. The moment I would inform about you, he would depart with large contingent of monkeys and bears to destroy the demons. Otherwise, I propose to carry you across sea to him on my back. He is now at *prsravan giri*, and I would take you there today, as fire fetches the oblations to Indr. I am confident none of the demons would be able to follow me and I would take you across sea as comfortably as I had crossed alone while coming here."

Hanuman's words made Sita excited and she addressed him, "How a small monkey like you would be able to carry me across sea ?" Hanuman realized her ignorance about his potential, and soon jumping down the tree<sup>16</sup> he showed his fire like brilliant gigantic form. Looking at his mountainous rise, she noticed his ruby face, bolt like strong body, and sharp nails which gave her an idea of his potential. Hanuman assured her, "I am confident of uprooting entire Lanka and carry them along. You should discard your doubt about my capability, and come over me; you will be able to remove the grief of Ram and Lakshaman.

She mentioned further, "I know that without such a great potential you wouldn't have been able to cross the sea. I can understand that you will be able to easily carry me but I need to consider all pros and cons. **First**, I am afraid, that due to your wind like speed I may suffer a fit causing my fall down in sea and the terrible marine creatures would soon feast upon me. **Second**, the demons on guard would attack when they would notice a woman being carried away by you. You would be busy in tackling them, and getting scared by the terrible fight I would go unconscious and definitely fall down in sea. **Third**, the probability is that demons might snatch me away from you, and I would be killed. **Fourth**, getting terrified by their fierce fighting, under extremely nervous situation, I might collapse over your back. If I am dead then the whole purpose of carrying me would be defeated. **Fifth**, even if you succeed in killing the demons, my husband Ram would be

<sup>15</sup> This suggests Sita stayed for about one year in Lanka. Refer *Aranya kand* 3-56-24, *sarg* 56, *shlok* 24, when Ravan determined the period of 12 months for Sita to accept his proposal.

<sup>16</sup> Hanuman was so far conversing with her from the tree itself.

deprived of the credit of eliminating the demons. **Sixth**, if they put me at an unknown place again after snatching from you, I would be inaccessible to all the monkeys and under that situation Ram and all other monkeys might end their life. **Seventh**, being a chaste woman, I would not touch anybody else other than my husband. My contact with Ravan was unavoidable because of his forceful abduction.”

She finally advised Hanuman, “Let Ram with Sugriv, Lakshaman and monkey army come here to fight out Ravan. I am sure Ram would emerge victorious, for none in this world is capable to face his terrible arrows.”

### 5-38 Sita's souvenir to Ram (70 / 1699)

Hanuman was extremely impressed by Sita's logic of discarding his mission of carrying her away on his back. He appreciated, “For a woman, it is really tough to cross one hundred *yojan* wide sea mounting my back. Your another strong point of observing conduct of chastity by not touching any person other than husband, is well taken. My proposal to take you out from Lanka was based on main intention of expediting your meeting with Ram. Other reason of gravity of the task of crossing this wide sea by any other person was also in the back of my mind. Rightly you have expressed your lack of keenness to accompany me. Under this situation, I pray you to give me some souvenir to convince Ram that I had met you.”

Responding to Hanuman, Sita spoke with tears in her eyes, “I will narrate some incidents which only Ram knows. If you narrate them to Ram he would believe your coming and conversing with me. Once an incidence occurred in a grove near *mandakini* river, in the north east of *chitrakoot* mountain. While he was enjoying the water sport, I was sitting alone in *tapashram* enjoying the fragrance of flowers. Suddenly he came wet and sat in my lap. Second time when I was alone, one meat eater crow frequently pecked at me severely. The crow used to hide after each pecking. I was disturbed by this impudence, and when I got up to fasten my loose under garment that a portion of it slipped down. I was about to set it right, Ram saw and took humour upon me. First I was a little upset, but soon I felt ashamed. He was sitting there, and tired of the crow's pecking I fell in his lap and slept for some pretty period of time. When I was awoke, it was his turn to sleep in my lap. When he slept, the crow again appeared and repeated the earlier activities of pecking upon me. The crow's peck at my chest caused blood to drop down over Ram. He got up and noticed the injury of my chest. When he gazed around, he saw that crow with blood stained claw facing towards me. He became furious and pulled a *kush* stick from the mat. Invoking the mantra of brahmashtra he charged that stick over that crow. The stick converted into a burning torch, chased the crow. Afraid of loss of life, the crow kept flying in the entire universe. The crow was son of Indr and had arrived from heaven. It tried seeking shelter at several places including that of his father Indr and other sages. Lastly it fell in the refuge of Ram, and he, out of compassion, pardoned the crow by damaging its right eye only.”

Narrating the incidence of mercy over the crow, Sita advised Hanuman, “Please remind Ram that for a petty incidence he had charged *brahmashtra* over a crow. Now when the

demon has abducted me, how does he tolerate such a severe and condemnable act of abduction? Why does he delay in charging his infallible shafts against the demon? For sure, there is something grievous of the sins I had committed that both the brothers, Ram and Lakshaman have forgotten me.”

Hearing the sorrowful words of Sita, Hanuman interfered to console her, “Neither Ram nor Lakshaman have forgotten you. They are constantly immersed in your memory. If you wish, kindly convey some message for them. Sita spoke to Hanuman, “Kindly offer my respectful salutation to Ram. Convey my good wishes to Lakshaman for his well being and advise him to make all preparations to remove my grief. You are my souvenir to convince Ram of meeting me.”

Sita, subsequently, opened a knotted cloth and took out the crest jewel. Handing over to Hanuman she asked him to pass on that souvenir to Ram. Hanuman gladly took the crest jewel, and when he found that jewel falling short<sup>17</sup> to fit over his arm, he put that one, over one of his fingers. He was so excited that after taking that souvenir Jewel, he felt as if he was standing in front of Ram and Lakshaman. Giving round of Sita with full reverence, he saluted her, and stood to seek her permission.

### 5-39 Sita’s anxiety (54 / 1753)

Sita mentioned, “Ram is familiar with the crest jewel which I gave you. Seeing this he would remember simultaneously my mother, me and king Dasarath.” She asked Hanuman to plan future course of action, and reminded him, “You have complete idea of Lanka, and therefore, greater responsibility lies over your shoulders. Your special effort would help remove my agony.”

When, in a bid to depart, Hanuman offered his humble respect in her feet she spoke in a choked voice, “Intimate both the brothers about my state of affairs here. Convey my greetings to monkey king Sugriv and other elder monkeys. Kindly advise Ram to end my agony soon if he wants to see me alive.”

Hanuman keeping his respectful folded palms over his head, responded positively and assured her, “Soon Ram will arrive here with scores of monkeys and bears. None from the humans, gods and demons are capable to face Ram in the battle field. For your sake he would even win sun, *Indr*, and death god *Yam*. He would be victorious, there is no doubt about it.”

Hearing his sweet and confident words, Sita further spoke, “If it is proper, hiding safely, stay one more day here which would extend further my relaxation period. For long I had been facing severe agony, and when you depart my sorrow would be compounded. Time and again I am concerned about the crossing of this vast sea by monkeys and both the brothers. Only three: *garud*, you and *vayu* god are capable of crossing this sea. The most vital unsolved puzzle is the crossing of sea. Do you see any solution? Kindly

<sup>17</sup> Although he was in a tiny form, the crest jewel was small for his arms.

enlighten me, otherwise I am not able to overcome my concern about this ticklish question.”

Hanuman assured her, “The excellent ones are never sent as a messenger, rather ordinary ones are chosen for such assignment. The contingent of monkeys under Sugriv have got innumerable valorous ones who can easily cross the sea. I am among the ordinary ones, and if I can cross this sea, where is the question of doubt about others. For Ram and Lakshaman, I assure you that I would take them across sea over my shoulders. They are powerful like fire and wind, and once in Lanka they would soon eliminate the demons. You should discard your concern and agony, and I assure you that their movement is delayed only upto the period I go back and tell them about your location.”

#### **5-40 Hanuman moved northward (25 / 1778)**

Sita spoke to Hanuman, “I am extremely glad to see you here. Please arrange my earliest visit to Ram. Remind him about his powerful shaft, which took one eye of the crow. He should recall another incident when the mark over my forehead was erased, and he put immediately a fresh one. How does he afford to languish me here in Lanka. I had carefully protected the crest jewel which used to give me solace here as if I was in your association. Now I send that to you to help you recollect about me. Ravan is cruel as well as ill intended, and I would no longer survive if your arrival is delayed.”

Hearing her sorrowful words, Hanuman spoke to her, “You need not worry now. The moment I met you, I take this as end of your agony. Both the brothers would very soon raze Lanka to dust.”

When Hanuman enquired about some other souvenir, Sita assured him, “This is the best souvenir I handed over to you. Taking a look at this crest jewel, Ram would be greatly impressed.”

Hanuman was about to take a leap for departure, that Sita again reminded him to accelerate the arrival of Ram and Lakshaman to Lanka. “I wish you a happy journey” , mentioned Sita to Hanuman.

Hearing the good wishes of Sita, Hanuman happily moved in the northern direction.

#### **5-41 *Pramada van* (ashok vatika) destroyed (21 / 1799)**

Before leaving Lanka, he intended to familiarize himself with the strategic strength of Ravan. Out of four<sup>18</sup> tactical initiatives, Hanuman preferred to adopt the fourth one. *Pramada van* was the inner most beautiful grove inside *ahsok vatika*, and he decided to damage the *pramada van*. He uprooted the trees, and stirred badly the water bodies. The chirping and charming birds deserted the grove in panic. Soon the most beautiful

<sup>18</sup> Sam, dan, bhed and dand (सम दान भेद दंड ) praise, gift, dissension, and penalty.



grove was ransacked beyond recognition. Having done that, he stood on the entry gate of the grove.

#### 5-42 Hanuman killed *kinkar* demons (44 / 1843)

Entire Lanka could hear the sound of breaking and falling of trees. The fleeing animals and birds indicated prevalence of abnormal situation in Lanka. The residents of the city also experienced incidence of bad omen. The chaotic scene caused waking up of dreaded demonesses on guard sleeping inside *pramada*. They noticed the felled trees, and also they spotted Hanuman at the gate. At that time, with a view to scare them, Hanuman had assumed a huge mountainous form with terrifying features.

The demonesses rushed to Sita and enquired from her whether she knew about that monkey at the gate. Sita denied, "You demons are champion in assuming any form. It is all your creation, I am not aware who is he."

Soon they rushed to Ravan and informed about complete ransacking of *pramada* by a monkey. They spoke to him, "Sita doesn't divulge any information about the monkey. He has damaged all the trees except the one under which Sita stayed."

Ravan became extremely angry so much so that his red eyes dropped tears as if two burning lamps dropped oil. He immediately dispatched selected contingent of eighty thousand *kinkar* demons. Coming to *pramada* they surrounded Hanuman from all sides. Hanuman produced terrifying roar announcing, "Hail to Ram, Lakshaman and Sugriv." The reverberations of his roar were heard all over Lanka. His sound was so terrible that flying birds dropped unconscious over ground.

Looking at the demons, he proudly mentioned, "I am an humble servant of Ram ( दासोऽहं कोसलेन्द्रस्य रामास्याकिल्ष्ट कर्मणः ) 5-42-34. My name is Hanuman and I am son of *vayu*. When I would attack with trees and rocks, thousands of Ravan wouldn't be able to face me. I am bent upon to destroy Lanka, and on completion of my mission, I would depart offering my salutation to Sita."

Demons, getting his introduction, charged from all sides their deadly weapons over him. Hanuman picked up an iron baton lying over ground near the gate he was standing. Using the iron baton he killed, one by one, all the demons.

A few of the survivors rushed back to Ravan, and informed him about killing of all the demons. Ravan soon dispatched the mighty warrior, Jambumali, son of Prahasta.

#### 5-43 Ashok van *chaityaprasad* (temple) destroyed (25 /1868)

After destroying the *pramada*, he thought to destroy the demons' temple also. Leaping high, he went up the temple and began hammering out the structures apart. The terrible sound of breaking the temple caused swoons to birds and animals. He frequently hailed glory to Ram, Lakshaman, and Sugriv. At the same time he repeated his introduction, "I am an humble servant of Ram ( दासोऽहं कोसलेन्द्रस्य रामास्याकिल्ष्ट कर्मणः ) 5-43-09. My name is

Hanuman and I am son of *vayu*. When I would attack with trees and rocks, thousands of Ravan wouldn't be able to face me. I am bent upon to destroy Lanka, and on completion of my mission, I would depart offering my salutation to Sita."

Hearing the terrible sound, the demons on guard laid a siege of Hanuman. He magnified himself to a formidable proportion. Picking up a golden pillar, he rotated that pillar swiftly causing break out of fire. The temple structure was soon burnt to ashes. Using the same pillar he killed the demons, and loudly announced, "Sugriv had dispatched thousands of monkeys to all directions. They have strength of elephants; some of ten, some of hundred, while some of thousand elephants. Soon Sugriv would arrive in Lanka with his large army of monkeys. As a consequence of enmity with Ram, Lanka would be destroyed, and all demons including Ravan would be eliminated."

#### **5-44 Jambumali killed (20 / 1888)**

Jambumali was a great warrior. He was in red dress having red garland around his neck. Riding a chariot pulled by asses he arrived near the *pramada's* gate. Holding his rainbow like bow, he pulled the string producing terrible sound. He found Hanuman over the gate, and soon he charged several arrows injuring his various organs; *ardhachandr* over face, *karni* over forehead, and ten *narach* over his arms. The blood coming out from several places of Hanuman's body further enhanced the beauty of his golden complexion.

Enraged Hanuman hurled several trees, and rock masses over Jambumali, but the demon cut them swiftly into pieces. Shooting more number of sharp shafts, the demon caused further injuries to Hanuman. Seized with immense anger, Hanuman hurled heavily the iron baton over Jambumali which not only brought mortal end of the demon himself but crushed beyond recognition his arrows, bow, chariot, and horses.

#### **5-45 Killing of seven sons of the Ravan's secretary (17 / 1905)**

Hearing the end of Jambumali, Ravan sent seven mighty sons of his secretary. Accompanied by large contingent of demons they arrived mounting horse pulled huge chariots. No sooner they arrived than they commenced showering deadly shafts over Hanuman. The mountainous form of Hanuman was covered with shafts as if a mountain had a hazy appearance under the heavy downpour. Moving freely, Hanuman saved himself. Finally, he stormed over the demons, and killed them using his slaps, clenched fists, nails and teeth. Soon the ground was strewn with dead bodies of demons, their weapons, and wrecked chariots.

#### **5-46 Five army heads killed (41 / 1946)**

The news of further devastation by Hanuman made Ravan nervous, but apparently he maintained his posture and commanded five army heads: Virupaksh, Yupaksh, Durdhar, Praghas, and Bhaskarn to tackle the monkey firmly. He spoke to them, "In the past I have seen several mighty monkeys who were Vali, Sugriv, Neel, Dwivid, and mighty bear chief Jambvan. Today's monkey seems to be not only a simple monkey but creation of gods against us. I guess Indr could have attained this monkey by dint of his

severe penance. Gods have been defeated by us several times, and this monkey appears to be someone sent by them to avenge their defeat. You need to be alert because outcome in a battle field always remains uncertain. I wish you hold this monkey alive and bring it to me. You are free to take your own decision according to the prevailing situation during your encounter.”

When those five warriors arrived near *pramada* they found Hanuman at the gate. At the very first sight they were impressed by Hanuman's overall personality. Durdhar commenced the combat by charging five arrows over his head, and this caused Hanuman to leap with a larger body in sky. Durdhar continued showering arrows over him. Hanuman gravitated his huge body and jumping over the chariot of Durdhar smashed all the eight horses, broke the axle. In this operation Durdhar couldn't survive and he fell crushed over ground.

Virupaksh and Yupaksh leaped up in sky to face the huge monkey, Hanuman. They pounded with their pestle over his chest. Hanuman picked up a large sal tree and bounced on both the demons leading to their immediate death.

Praghas and Bhaskarn together pounced over Hanuman with their trident and sharp pestle. Injured severely by their weapons, oozing blood made him reddish like the rising sun. Wrathful Hanuman picked up a hillock full of trees, animals and snakes and dashed that over both the demons. Getting crushed, they also died instantly.

When all the five heads of army were killed, Hanuman tackled the left over army firmly. Using their chariot, and elephants he killed all of them. The ground was strewn with dead bodies, and there was hardly any space left for movement. Hanuman again came back to the gate demonstrating his readiness to face further attack.

#### **5-47 Akshkumar ( अक्षकुमार ) killed (38 / 1984)**

When Ravan heard about the death of five army heads, he couldn't utter a word and gazed at his son, Akshkumar. He rose up from his seat, and excitedly left for the *pramada*. He mounted his invincible chariot which he had attained by severe penance. Being pulled by eight horses, it shone like sun. Inside of the chariot was furnished with varieties of deadly weapons. Accompanied by huge army, he arrived where Hanuman was sitting over the *pramada* gate.

Akshkumar had a glance over him and expanded his body to a large size. He took out deadly arrows and coming close to Hanuman commenced the combat without any loss of time. Both were engaged in such a fierce fighting that caused great havoc in the universe. Sun became still with reduced radiance, *vayu* (wind) was stopped, mountains trembled, sky was full of terrible sound, and sea was swept by storm. When Akshkumar hit Hanuman's head by three arrows, stream of blood made Hanuman like *anshumali* sun. He became angry and enlarged his form to a mountainous proportion. Akshkumar continued showering arrows as if rains poured over a mountain. Akshkumar's ferocious attack, made Hanuman more excited, and he produced a terrible sound.

Hanuman appreciated the valour and warfare skill of the demon, Akshkumar who looked like a child and rising sun. Looking to his tender age, Hanuman was full of compassion and didn't like to kill him. When Akshkumar maintained terrible shooting but Hanuman escaped all his shafts by passing through the gap between two adjacent<sup>19</sup> arrows. Hanuman's movement was set at astonishingly high speed like that of stormy wind. In order to check the rising spirit of Akshkumar, Hanuman killed the eight horses of the chariot by his slaps only. When he manually broke the chariot, Akshkumar jumped in sky with his sword and bow. The demon continued chasing Hanuman in sky with shower of arrows. Hanuman got hold of both his legs, and rotating him around several times by legs, he hurled the demon down over ground. Akshkumar fell dead with all his organs scattered around. Gods, sages, *gandharv* and other celestial beings who had gathered in sky, took an awful glance at Hanuman.

#### 5-48 Indrajeet seized Hanuman (61 / 2045)

The news of loss of Akshkumar was horribly shocking to the demon king Ravan. He addressed his valorous son Indrajeet, "This monkey has rare potential. He killed the contingent of deadly *kinkar* demons, seven mighty sons of the secretary, five top army heads, and your lovely brother Akshkumar. You are well versed in all sorts of warfare, and gods have accepted your superiority. Besides rare physical potential, you have also earned several invincible shafts and weapons from Brahma. Like me, you are equally competent over the earth in use of all sorts of weapons. There is no match of your valour in the battle field. I wish, you go alone, and ensure success in our favour."

Before leaving, Indrajeet gave respectful round to Ravan. Paired by other elite demons in the royal court, he set out mounting a brilliant chariot pulled by four lions. His chariot had a flag marked with the image of Indr. Seeing him coming close, Hanuman immensely enlarged his body.

Indrajeet charged all sorts of arrows over him. Hanuman escaped the attack due to his astonishing high wind speed. He could manage to pass through the gap of the two adjacent arrows. His whirling speed puzzled Indrajeet, for he failed to strike him with his surest of arrows. Hanuman also appreciated the valour of Indrajeet, since he couldn't find chance to hold him in his grip.

Lastly, Indrajeet discarded his idea of killing him, and thought of catching him in fetters. With this intention when he charged *brahmashtr*, Hanuman fell in fetters of the divine weapon. Hanuman had a boon from Brahma to be freed in a moment from the influence of all divine weapons including the ultimate one *brahmashtr*.

Demons found Hanuman lying ensnared over ground, and they immediately seized him with stronger ropes. When Indrajeet took a glance at Hanuman, he found him freed from

<sup>19</sup> Being son of vayu god, Hanuman was capable of transforming instantly as he wished. He therefore, although whirling around in a gigantic form could be able to pass through the small space between two adjacent arrows. ( शरान्तरे मास्तवद विनिष्पतन ) 5- 47- 23.

*brahmashtr*, and he was seized only with the ropes. This caused great surprise to Indrajeet, and he could realize that Hanuman had voluntarily preferred to be seized by ropes, otherwise the one who could overcome the divine fetters could have easily discarded the earthly fetters also.

Bound in ropes, Hanuman was taken to Ravan. On way, he heard demons pronouncing to kill him or eat him alive. He gave them opportunity to play with him, and several times he was physically teased by the naughty demons.

When he was produced in the royal court, he had a view of splendid possession of the demon king. He was impressed by the physical personality of Ravan holding the royal court. Having a look at the monkey, Ravan commanded to his secretaries, "Find out the details about this monkey, and his intention of visiting Lanka." Hanuman responded forthwith, "I am a messenger of monkey king Sugriv."

#### **5-49 Pondering Hanuman (20 / 2065)**

When Hanuman saw Ravan mounted over royal throne he was surprised with his magnificent personality. Hanuman continued watching carefully, "Ravan was dark in complexion and several precious silk cloths had enhanced his physique. His ten heads (5-49-6) appeared like deadly snakes magnifying the image of *mandrachala*. The crown of his heads, and jewels over several organs appeared appropriately placed as if they were produced by mental resolve. All the jewels had carving of precious gems. Varieties of fragrant sandal pastes were found applied at several spots of his huge body. His throne was equally impressive which further enhanced his personality."

Four well qualified ministers: Durdhar, Prahast, Mahaparshv, and Nikumbh, were seated in the first row of the royal court close to Ravan. Although Ravan was involved in immoral acts, Hanuman was greatly impressed by him. He pondered for a while, "If this demon king would have adhered to righteousness, he would have proved the greatest among the gods including Indr. It is most surprising as well as puzzling that he has all the physical qualities of a mighty king."

#### **5-50 Prahast's enquiry (19 / 2084)**

Seeing grey eyed Hanuman Ravan thought, "Once I had ridiculed Nandi at Kailas. It seems, to teach me lesson he had assumed this form." Reflecting thus, he advised Prahast to enquire, "Who is he? Why did he come to Lanka?"

On behest of Ravan, Prahast enquired from Hanuman, "Have you been sent by either of Indr, Varun, Kuber, Yam or Vishnu? What is the purpose of your visit to Lanka?"

Hanuman discarded their guess and mentioned, "I am agent of none of the gods. I wanted to see Ravan, and with this intention I destroyed *pramada van*. When the demons attacked over me, I had to save myself, and accordingly they have been killed. I have a boon of *Brahma* that no weapon or bond would affect me. Although currently I

am freed from *brahma*'s bond, I came here in simple fetters. I am a messenger of Ram, and have come here with his assignment."

### 5-51 Recitation of Ram's glory (45 / 2129)

Hanuman continued addressing Ravan, "Sugriv is your cousin brother (5-51-2), and he had sent me here. I wish you hear his message to you. Recently there has been a king known as Dasarath who is famous as Indr. His eldest and endearing son, Ram has taken a resort in forest of Dandak in honor of his father's command. Ram stayed in forest with his brother Lakshaman, and wife Sita. Somehow Sita, the daughter of Janak, is missing from Janasthan. Searching Sita, Ram with his brother Lakshaman, met Sugriv at *rishyamuk*. Sugriv assured him to find out Sita, and he gave words to Sugriv to restore his lost kingdom. Ram killed Vali using a single shaft, and made Sugriv sovereign king of monkeys. Truthful Sugriv had dispatched monkeys in all quarters to find out Sita. They are mighty as well as capable like *garud* and *vayu*. I am one of them, and my name is Hanuman. I am a mental son of *vayu* god. Crossing hundred yojan sea, I came to Lanka and have located Sita here."

He further exhorted Ravan, "You have earned the splendorous kingdom and royal possession by dint of your severe penance. It is righteousness of your penance that gave you huge potential. It is immoral and unrighteous to detain somebody's wife. Such act is sinful and leads to complete destruction of the doer. There is nobody in this universe who could face the arrows of Ram and Lakshaman. I have already met Sita, and I advise you to return her to Ram. None can digest poisonous food, similarly you can't detain Sita with you. Your penance has given you immortality against gods and demons, but Sugriv is monkey and Ram is a human being. You can't escape their wrath alive. Sita is not a simple woman, she would fetch end of Lanka. Although I am alone capable of destroying entire Lanka but I don't have the permission of Ram to do that. I advise you to ponder carefully over three events: destruction of devil demons in Janasthan, end of Vali, and coronation of Sugriv, and then look for your well being."

Hanuman warned Ravan, "I am a monkey, servant of Ram, and his messenger. (5-51-38) रामदासस्य दूतस्य वानरस्य । Listen to my truthful declaration. Even four headed Brahma, three eyed Rudr, and gods' chief Indr wouldn't be able to provide you protection against Ram."

Ravan didn't like Hanuman's advice, and wrathfully ordered the attendants to kill him immediately.

### 5-52 Vibhishan interfered (28 / 2157)

Ravan was extremely angry, and Vibhishan heard his command to kill the messenger of Sugriv and Ram. He thought, "it is unbecoming of a king to kill a messenger." Although Ravan was angry and to speak before him was a tough task, Vibhishan submitted politely, "I beg pardon, and allow me to advise. Kindly discard your anger, and consider the propriety of your order. Excellent among kings never kills some one's messenger."

You are learned in all Vedas, scriptures and statecraft. Be pleased and review your order so that you don't earn bad name on this account."

Vibhishan's request didn't impress Ravan, and he mentioned, "This monkey has destroyed *pramada*, and killed several demons. He is unpardonable."

Vibhishan continued his submission, "You have won gods and there is none to oppose you. You know about dos and don'ts of a successful and renowned king. Scriptures enjoin some physical punishment, but not the capital punishment to a messenger. This monkey has definitely committed condemnable acts, and he could be punished by inflicting loss of some of the organs, tonsuring, grievous mark on his body etc. but not the death. A messenger always talks in favour of his master. Capital punishment should be given to his master who had sent him here, but not to him. I would advise to send select contingent of army and arrest those two humans who have caused him to be here."

Ravan, reflecting a little over Vibhishan's advice, agreed to his points of view for sparing the life of the messenger.

#### **5-53 Tail set on fire (44 / 2201)**

Consenting to Vibhishan's advice, Ravan decreed, "Monkeys love their tail, therefore, let the tail of this monkey be burnt. He must be moved around the city with his burning tail. When he will go back, his relatives, and friends would see him in pitiable condition of burnt tail. "

Demons taking hold of Hanuman wrapped old cloths around the tail. To take pleasure, Hanuman enlarged his body again, and the demons having wrapped cloths over his long extended tail, poured oil and set it on fire. Hanuman used his burning tail to beat severely several demons. He was again seized and put in fetters. Hanuman thought, "Although I can break it, I must remain in fetters, because I haven't properly observed the strategic security of this city at night. It is good that during day time they would take me around, and I would carefully observe the city's fortification."

Keeping him chained, demons took him around the entire city. After sometime, Hanuman, in fetters, took a flight and rose to the terrace of a building. When he reduced his size, fetters automatically went loose, and he was free from any fetters.

In the meanwhile, demonesses informed Sita about the plight of Hanuman whose tail was set ablaze. Sita offered her sincere prayer to fire god, "If I have protected my chastity, kindly get cooler with Hanuman." In varieties of ways she prayed fire god to be kind to Hanuman. Her prayer was favourably answered by the fire god as well as *vayu* god. Wind (*vayu*) blew at a much cooler temperature causing comfort to Hanuman as if he had a chunk of frozen ice over the burning end of tail. Hanuman also realized the miracle and felt no burning pain.

Hanuman saw an iron baton lying nearby, he picked up the baton and using that he again killed scores of demons on guard of the city.

### 5-54 Burning Lanka (51 / 2252)

Hanuman felt satisfied with his achievements in Lanka, "I have already met Sita. Subsequently, having badly destroyed the *pramada* grove, I also killed scores of mighty and renowned warriors. Now let me destroy the forts of Lanka."

He leapt from one building to another observing the city's layout of structures and groves. His movement looked like a drifting dark cloud with frequent flashes of lightening. During this process he burnt the mansions of Prahast, Mahaparshav, Vajrdanshtr, Shuk, Saran, Indrajeet, Jambumali, Sumali, Rashmiket, Suryashatru, Hrushvakarn, Danshtr, Romash, Ranonmatth, Matth, Dhavjgreev, Vidyujjihan, Hastimukh, Karal, Vishal, Shonitaksh, Kumbhakarn, Makraksh, Narantak, Kumbh, Nikumbh, Ygyshatru, and Brahmsatru.

After sparing the house of Vibhishan, he jumped to the largest of the forts belonging to Ravan. He dropped the burning fire over there, and caused complete burning of all the mansions lying over the premises of the demon king. The burning of the forts were further aggravated by sudden incidence of stormy wind. Several demonesses coming out of the burning houses were burnt with their children. Hanuman also leapt to the peaks of mountains and set ablaze the forest over the mountains.

The burning temperature was so high that gold, coral pieces, and other gems were seen in molten state and flowed freely. Besides scores of chariots, horses, and elephants were burnt to ashes. The demons gathered in panic expressed their feelings, "The monkey appears to be one of the mighty gods either *Indr*, or *Varun*, or *Yam*, or *Kuber*, or sun, or moon, or *Agni*, or *Vayu*. Angry four-faced Brahma himself appears to have caused this havoc. Vishnu who is beyond description, inaccessible in meditation, and rare in manifestation, would have invoked his *maya shakti* (associate) to wreak this havoc over Lanka. The city has burnt as if Shiv destroyed the city of Tripur." Panicked with the colossal loss of wealth, animals, and the lives of dear and near ones, the city of Lanka reverberated with wailing cry of demons.

The flames of burning Lanka were so high that it gave an impression as if entire earth was set ablaze. Gods and other celestial beings gathered in sky recited the glory of Hanuman for performing such a miraculous feat. Having attained his goal, Hanuman recited repeatedly the glory of Ram, and he extinguished his burning tail by immersing it in sea.

### 5-55 Hanuman's anxiety (35 / 2287)

Having put out the tail's fire in sea, he came out and had a look of Lanka burnt to ashes. Suddenly he was haunted by an imaginary fear, "Entire city is destroyed beyond



recognition. Carelessly I caused the end of Sita also, she must not have escaped from the razing fire. My this act will cause a great calamity to Ram. Hearing end of Sita, both the brothers would end their life. Sugriv would also not survive such a shock. Two brothers, Bharat and Shatrughn will hardly live longer. My childish act of destroying Lanka would cause annihilation of the *Ikshavaku* house. I am a sinner, and I must end my life here itself."

While he suffered from the anxiety, he got another thought, "Fire god was kind enough on me that he saved my tail from any burn injury. I don't think he wouldn't have saved Sita from burning. I know that Sita's penance of chastity, is enough to cause elimination of fire itself rather than she would suffer any affliction from the blazing fire."

In the meanwhile he heard the celestial beings, "Hail to Hanuman! He razed entire Lanka to ashes but surprisingly, Sita remained untouched." Hanuman became happy that Sita is safe and I am free from any impending sin."

### 5-56 Returning Hanuman (51 / 2338)

Before leaving, Hanuman with folded hands again visited Sita and offered his respectful salutation. Sita asked him to stay<sup>20</sup> for one more day hiding to some unknown place, and she further mentioned, "So far I have suffered a lot and I got some solace after meeting you. Once you leave, I would again face similar horrible situation which I had witnessed earlier. Although I am highly impressed by your performances but I still carry the apprehension about crossing of sea by Sugriv, his army, and two brothers Ram and Lakshaman." Hanuman assured her about the potential of Sugriv, his army, and Ram and Lakshaman ([ref. sarg 39 of Sundarkand, shlok 26 through 47](#)).

Saluting Sita again with full respect, he left for his return journey of crossing back sea. To gain enough momentum, he climbed up the *arisht* mountain on the southern shore of sea. His rapid movement preparatory to launching on leap, caused terrible disturbance to the mountain and it quaked under his high foot pressure. This caused rocks flying into splinters, serpents raising their hoods, lions roaring, wild animals running in panic, and celestial residents quitting their shelters. Thirty *yojan* high and ten *yojan* wide *arisht* mountain soon sank to the level ground.

### 5-57 Union of Hanuman with Angad and Jambavan (53 / 2391)

While flying back across sea, Hanuman looked like a winged mountain. In the backdrop of vastness of sea, sky also appeared like a vast inverted sea where celestial beings and stars looked quite different: moon light like water, wind like ripples, *nag*, *ykash*, and *gandharv* like lotus, moon like lily, sun like watermelon, *pushya* and *shravana* asterism like ducks, *swati* asterism like swan, clouds like grass weeds, *punarvasu* asterism like large fish, mars like crocodile, and *airavat* elephant like hillock. Hanuman moved like

<sup>20</sup> From *shlok* 3 through 21 of this *sarg* 56 are almost verbatim repetition of *shlok* 20, and *shlok* 26 through 47 of *sarg* 39 of *sundar kand* itself.

*garud* in sky, and sometimes he was under cloud, and soon emerged like moon. Proceeding thus he touched *mainak* mountain, and like an arrow in motion he continued his flight further. Coming close to *mahendra* mountain on northern shore, he produced sound of a thundering cloud.

Passionately, waiting monkeys heard his thunder like roar, and with utmost excitement they commenced leaping from one tree to another. Jambvan was glad to see returning Hanuman, and he mentioned loudly, "Roaring Hanuman, is an auspicious sign for us. He must have attained his goal." When Hanuman landed at mahendr, he found himself surrounded by excited monkeys. They offered him delicious fruits in gift. They were so much pleased that some were busy in producing welcome sound, while others brought branches of trees for his sitting.

Hanuman offered his respectful salutation to Jambvan and Angad who in return demonstrated their humble respect for him. Hanuman broke the good news, "I have met venerable woman Sita." Subsequently, Hanuman holding Angad's hands, moved to the lovely arena of mahendr mountain. He again mentioned, "Sita stays in ashok van of Lanka. She has become lean and thin. Her hair lock has turned into a single mat. She is excited to see Ram." Hearing him speaking thus elated the monkeys so much so that they again produced pleasant sounds. They danced raising their tail, and in a bid to express their gratitude, they created a race like scene to go and touch Hanuman.

Angad was anxious to hear the details of his travelogue. He addressed the surrounding monkeys, "Hanuman is the most valorous among us. He has demonstrated his rare capability of performing something impossible. He crossed the sea twice. His valour, strength and skill is beyond any description. With his grace now we shall happily meet Ram holding the good news of locating Sita. Hanuman has a rare devotion to Ram, and with his good news Ram will, for sure, discard his sorrowful state."

### **5-58 Hanuman's Lanka's travelogue (169 / 2560)**

Monkeys at *Mahendrgiri* were glad to see Hanuman among them. When all the monkeys took their seat, Jambvan made queries to Hanuman, "How did you find out her? How is she? How does Ravan behave with her? What did she speak to you? While being in Kishkindha, how should we present this mission of locating her? What shall be our future course of action?"

Responding to Jambvan, Hanuman first offered his mental salutation to Sita, and then began narrating the details of his travel to Lanka. Covering the journey over sea he mentioned, "When I leapt high over sea from *Mahendragiri*, I had single objective of crossing the sea at the earliest. While cruising ahead, I saw a mountain rising to me, whom I took as an obstacle on my way. Making several strikes with my tail, I made several fragments of the rocks of the mountain. Soon I heard a voice, "Son, take me as your uncle. I am Mainak, and I am greatly obliged to your father *Vayu*. Earlier, mountains had wings, and hearing complain from the people of their willfulness, Indr cut their wings off. I being pushed down in sea by your father *Vayu*, have saved my wings. I

felt it obligatory to assist you in the mission of Ram.” He wished me all success, and I proceeded further. Continuing for quite some time on my way, I met Sursa, mother of snakes. She stood on my way and spoke, “Gods have assigned you as my food.” I told her the story of Ram whose wife Sita was stolen by Ravan. After finding her location, I would inform Ram about her, and thereafter I will be present at your service. I was about ten *yojan* wide when I met her, and I enlarged it further by one and halftimes. She also enlarged the opening of her mouth in proportion to my expanding body. Suddenly, I assumed a thumb size, and entering her mouth, swiftly came out. She was glad to see my cleverness, and she wished success in my mission. Thereafter, I continued my journey like flying *garud*, but soon I felt a break in my speed. I could not find any reason, but someone had caught hold of my shadow. When I looked down, I found a demoness with large gaping mouth. I accordingly enlarged my body but she opened her mouth further wide. Soon I became very small, and cutting off her chest I flew in the sky. When I saw down below, she had fallen dead in sea. I heard *siddha* speaking, “Hanuman had killed the demoness *Simhika*.”

Hanuman continued his journey details what had happened when he entered inside Lanka, “I landed on the southern sea shore, and entered inside Lanka after sunset. Initially nobody noticed my entry, but soon a dark complexioned dreadful woman obstructed my way and tried to kill me. To save my life, I charged a single pound over her, with my left fist. When she fell on ground, she disclosed that she was Lanka’s city deity. She allowed me to enter into Lanka mentioning, “My defeat indicates that you will be able to win over all the demons.” Whole night I kept wandering from one place to another to find out Sita. I searched all nooks and corners of the inner palace of Ravan. When she was not seen any where I became sad. Soon I saw a beautiful grove and scaling over its ramparts, I entered inside the grove. The grove was full of *ashok* trees. Climbing the tallest tree, I could see Sita sitting under one of them. I found her immersed in sorrow with dust collected over her head. Her hair had turned into a single lock. Although she looked impressive young, but she had become weak due to keeping fast, and long spell of grief. Dreadful demonesses were on her guard, and she appeared like a deer surrounded by lions.”

Talking about Ravan’s behavior, Hanuman mentioned, “Late night, I heard the sweet notes of anklets and other jewels. Ten headed Ravan, surrounded by his wives, arrived in *ashok* grove. In my shrunken form, I hid behind the leaves over the tree. Seeing him coming, Sita trembled with fear and squeezed her body while sitting under the tree. Coming close, ten-headed Ravan fell over Sita’s feet. Offering himself as her servant, he mildly persuaded her to accept him. When he felt neglected by her, he threatened to drink her blood after two months. Sita confidently scolded him, “Being a grand-daughter of *Ikshavaku* house, I am wife of righteous Ram. I wonder, in speaking thus about me, why didn’t you lose your tongue. O thief! When my husband was not present, you hijacked me to Lanka. You can never face him, and you don’t deserve to be his servant either, for he is adherent to truth, valorous and invincible.” Hearing Sita’s harsh words Ravan became angry, and he rushed towards Sita with his clenched fist to kill her. Royal demonesses cried in alarm, and Mandodari forbade him in doing so. Persuading him

further, they took him back to the palace. When Ravan left, the demonesses on guard threatened her with dire consequences. When she ignored their initiatives, they went to report Ravan about her firm resolve. Coming back, they again tried to torture her, and ultimately tired of their effort they fell asleep. Getting alone Sita wailed with grief for her husband. In the meanwhile, Trijata, a demoness among them, rose and spoke to them, "You all should eat yourself and not Sita. I have seen in dream auspicious happenings in favour of Sita, and painful end of the demons of Lanka. Only Sita would be able to protect us against the anger of Ram. We should seek pardon of her, and she is kind enough to pardon us by offering a single salutation." When Sita heard about the dream, she assured them full protection from her side if it came to be true."

Describing his efforts to converse with Sita, Hanuman narrated, "I was extremely anxious to talk to her. In order to win her confidence, I initiated with the recitation of the glory of the *Ikshavaku* dynasty. Hearing my words, with tears in her eyes, she spoke to me, "O, excellent among monkeys! Who are you, and how did you come here? Who had sent you, and how do you know Ram?" In response to her queries, I mentioned that I am Hanuman, and I have come here as commanded by monkey king Sugriv. I am a messenger of Ram, and I have got this signet ring as Ram's souvenir to you. O Venerable one! Tell me, what can I do for you? If you permit, I could carry you to Ram and Lakshaman. Declining my proposal, she preferred Ram himself to arrive, and eliminate Ravan before taking her out from Lanka."

Hanuman further narrated as to how he got the souvenir from her for Ram, "Bending low I offered my salutation to her, and requested for some souvenir to convince Ram that I had seen Sita. She gave me her crest jewel and mentioned, "Seeing this, Ram would extend regard to you." Offering my respectful salutation to her, I made a clockwise round of her. She asked me to convey her pitiable condition to Ram, and arrange arrival of Ram, Lakshaman and Sugriv to Lanka within two months otherwise after that she won't found alive."

Hanuman continued further, "Hearing Sita's words, I became angry against demons, and I suffered from anxiety of future plan of her liberation. At once, my body began expanding and I commenced destroying that lovely grove of Ravan. The scared birds and animals caused waking up of the sleeping demonesses. They rushed to Ravan, and informed him about destruction of the inner grove called *pramada van*. Ravan sent eighty thousand strong demons called *kinkar*, and they were equipped with trident and pestle. I killed all of them using an iron baton. Some of the survivors reported back to Ravan about the end of those demons. In the meanwhile, I destroyed the most beautiful temple structure having one hundred pillars, which was situated inside that grove. Ravan sent Jambumali, son of Prahast with large army. That demon was a ferocious warrior but I killed him with my great effort. After that, Ravan dispatched seven mighty sons of his minister. Using an iron baton, I dispatched them all to the death world. Following them, arrived five army heads of Lanka, and I eliminated them also. Soon Ravan sent his warrior son Akshakumar. Somehow I got hold of the legs of that son of Mandodari, who was skillful in warfare. Rotating him hundred times by his legs, I dashed him down

against ground, and he died. Ravan, then sent<sup>21</sup> his second son, Indrajeet who was mighty and champion in war. Very swiftly he used *brahmastr* against me, and I was put in bond of chains. When they produced me before Ravan, he asked me about my identity and my intention of visiting Lanka, and why did I kill so many demons.”

Hanuman described his further conversation with Ravan, “I replied him that I did all for the sake of Sita. I am a messenger of Ram and minister of Sugriv. My name is Hanuman, and I am a mental son of *vayu* god. I informed him that Sugriv had sent message for him, “Ram met me on *rishyamuk* mountain while searching Sita who had been abducted by you. Killing Vali by a single shaft, Ram restored my lost kingdom, and I am committed to find out Sita. You should immediately return Sita to Ram, before my monkey army kill you in Lanka.” Hearing message of Sugriv, Ravan became angry, and commanded for my death. His brother, Vibhishan interfered and pleaded, “Scriptures don’t enjoin killing of a messenger. It is natural that a messenger will truly convey the message of his master. At the most, a messenger can be spared by inflicting injury to some of his organs.” Ravan agreed to Vibhishan’s proposal, and he ordered to set my tail on fire. The demons wrapped varieties of cloths around my tail. They beat me with clenched fists, and batons, and put my tail on fire.”

Hanuman described burning of Lanka, “I wanted to see Lanka in broad day light, and therefore, I preferred to remain in the fetters. They took me around through the streets of the city proclaiming my fault and consequent punishment. When I had familiarized myself with the city’s layout, I squeezed my body, and automatically the bonds dropped loose. Taking to my normal form, I took up an iron baton, and killed the demons taking me round the city. I rose to the terraces of the mansions, and burnt the entire city using the fire from my burning tail. Subsequently, I was seized with an apprehension of eliminating Sita also in the fire holocaust. I was grieved with my willful act, but soon I heard from the celestial bards (*charan*), that Sita was safe, and nothing had happened to her. Soon I realized the glory of Ram, that fire god had become cool on me, and saved my tail without any burn injury. Being overjoyed, I went back to Sita. Seeking her permission, I left Lanka gaining momentum from the top of *arisht* mountain.”

Hanuman, concluding the story, requested them to plan for the future, and exhorted them to take up the balance initiatives for her immediate liberation.

### 5-59 Hanuman exhorted monkeys (32 / 2592)

Hanuman further mentioned, “I am greatly satisfied visiting Sita in *ashok van*. So far, we have successfully attained the target set by Ram and Sugriv. Sita has huge reserve of penance. Even fire could be destroyed by her one touch, but Ravan survived her abduction. I wonder whether Ravan has also great accumulation of power by penance. I

<sup>21</sup> Refer *sarg* 48 (*shlok* 11 though 22), where Ravan advised Indrajeet to go alone and face the monkey skillfully. But here in *sarg* 58, from *shlok* 128 though 131, it is mentioned that Indrajeet had come with army, and Hanuman first eliminated his accompanying army.

imagine his power must have by now been neutralized by this unrighteous act of abduction and soon he would meet his end.”

Hanuman made a proposal, “If Jambvan and others agree, it would be proper, to first redeem Sita from our efforts, and then go with her to meet Ram. I am confident I alone can destroy Lanka with all demons. Since I didn’t have the mandate, I came back collecting relevant information. I am sure, Angad and Jambvan would alone can also eliminate the demons. Although Indrajeet is capable of shooting divine weapons which hit the target without being seen, but I would definitely annul all those weapons. With the active support of Neel, Dwvid and Maind (sons *Aswini kumar*) we would be able to attain victory. I am not able to bear the plight of Sita. It is said, if a student pursues his study on *pratipada* (first day of the fortnight), his knowledge is tapered down (5-59-31), similarly staying in Lanka Sita is becoming thinner. Her body and *sari* are smeared with dust, so much so that her hair has turned into a single lock.”

He further exhorted his fellow monkeys, “I feel privileged in mentioning that Lanka reverberates with my announcement<sup>22</sup> “Victory to Ram, and Lakshaman! Victory to Sugriv, a protégé of Ram! I am a servant of Ram. I am son of *vayu* god, and my name is Hanuman (5-59-19/20)”. Demons are scared of hearing the word, ‘*Hanuman*’, because killing scores of demons, I alone burnt the entire Lanka. Now it is upto you to decide further course of action.”

### 5-60 Excited Angad (20 / 2612)

Hearing Hanuman, Angad expressed his excitement to act as advised by Hanuman. He mentioned, “Dwid and Maind are alone adequate to kill all the demons. To honour Aswinikumar, Brahma gave them boon of longevity. With the boon of Brahma they have become proud of their potential. Prevailing upon gods they have sipped nectar (*amrit*). Hanuman has already killed renowned demons and I am sure, I alone would eliminate the remaining ones. This would become several times magnified by active support of all of you.”

Supporting Hanuman's idea he mentioned, “I very much like the idea of Hanuman that we must redeem Sita before we go to meet Ram, Lakshaman and Sugriv.”

Jambvan, the matured bear chief cautioned Angad, “I never doubt the capabilities of the mighty members of our team. My only point is of our mandate. Ram asked us to find out Sita, and retrieving her is his responsibility. If we get back Sita, he may find it against the practice of his dynasty. I, therefore, propose to defer our program, and first intimate Ram about our findings. Let him decide and command our further assignment.”

<sup>22</sup> जयत्यतिबलो रामो लक्ष्मणश्च महाबलः । राजा जयति सुग्रीवो राघवेणाभिपालितः । 19 ।

अहं कोसलराजस्य दासः पवनसम्भवः । हनुमानिति सर्वत्र नाम विश्रावितं मया । 20 । 5-59-19/20

### 5-61 Feast in *madhuvan* (24 / 2636)

Angad and Hanuman readily consented to Jambvan's proposal. Lead by Hanuman, they left for *rishyamuk*. Close to Kishkindha, they arrived near *madhuvan*, a special orchard of selected fruits and quality honey. This was under personal use of the king Sugriv, and he had deputed his maternal uncle Dadhimukh for its protection.

Monkeys sought the permission of Angad to taste the fruits and honey of *madhuvan*. Taking prior concurrence of Jambvan and other elders, Angad allowed them to enjoy the pleasure of delicious fruits.

Monkeys enjoyed the fruits and honey to their fill, and in the process they got intoxicated. The influence of liquor like honey, caused them behave freely, and they began producing varieties of dances and childish games. Dadhimukh, the protector of the orchard objected their presence. Monkeys were not in themselves, therefore, they lost sight of the royal displeasure and subsequent punishment. Dadhimukh's protest was opposed by the monkeys.

### 5-62 Complain to Sugriv (38 / 2664)

Hanuman himself encouraged the monkeys of his team to enjoy the feast. He stood guard to them and made them free to take as much honey as they like. Monkeys enjoyed their liberty. Picking up the bee hives, they squeezed honey, and took as much as they could drink. Someone gulped as high as one *dron* (32 seer or almost 32 kg) at one time. Partly they drank, and partly they spoiled.

Guards intimated the status of wanton destruction of the orchard by monkeys to Dadhimukh. He was angry, and he himself arrived to restrain the monkeys. Soon the combat ensued, and the monkeys thrashed the guards badly. When Dadhimukh attacked with an uprooted tree, Angad handled him personally, disregarding that Dadhimukh was his maternal grandfather (*nana*).

Humiliated Dadhimukh, rushed to Sugriv by taking the sky root. When he reached close to Sugriv who was sitting with Ram and Lakshaman, he landed on ground, and pale faced, offered palm-folded salutation on the feet of Sugriv.

### 5-63 Sugriv guessed the success in mission (33/ 2697)

When Sugriv saw Dadhimukh sad, he enquired, "What is the matter, and what caused you to be here?" Dadhimukh intimated him, "*Madhuvan* has been out of bounds so far, and I have been protecting it carefully since the period of your father Rikshraja *ऋक्षराजा*, and elder brother Vali. None of you ever allowed anyone to willfully consume the products. Today, the monkeys lead by Hanuman, not only drank the honey, but caused major damage also to the trees. When they were checked by guards, they responded with anger and subsequently thrashed the guards as well. Finally the guards have been driven out."

Overhearing the conversation of Dadhimukh and Sugriv, Lakshaman enquired about the incident. Sugriv spoke to him, "There is good news. *Madhuvan* had been our ancestral property gifted to us by gods. Angad could never destroy the *madhuvan*, and his involvement in enjoying the honey and fruits suggests that south team has attained the goal of locating Sita. Hanuman is quite capable in accomplishing the assignment, and I guess he must have been pivotal in fulfilling our passionate desire."

Sugriv advised Dadhimukh, 'not to worry', and asked him to send Angad quickly to them.

#### 5-64 Arrival to Ram (45 / 2742)

Dadhimukh taking the sky route speedily landed in *madhuvan*. On his return when he saw monkeys urinating honey mixed water, he guessed end of their intoxicated state and they were gaining back to normalcy. He met Angad, and submitted to him, "You have come back from a long distance. Please relax and enjoy as long as you like. We were mistaken, and I tender sincere apology to you. O Prince! You are our master. When Sugriv learnt about your arrival in *madhuvan* he has become excited to meet you. He wants you to see him immediately."

Angad addressed the monkeys, "By now you must have relaxed, and if you so wish let us go back to Ram." Monkeys collectively praised Angad for his greatness and departed for Kishkindha. Angad and Hanuman using sky route arrived near Ram, and while landing they produced sweet sound.

When Sugriv heard their sound, he submitted to Ram about attainment of the set goal, and pleaded, "In case of the failed mission, they would have never produced sound on their arrival, rather they would have come back quietly. I am sure they would have never come back to me empty handed after lapse of the target period. I have a hunch that Hanuman must have been successfully accomplished the objective."

Hanuman, while prostrating his head over Ram's feet mentioned, "Sita, observing the penance of chastity is well." Ram and Lakshaman were glad to hear his statement, "I have met venerable Sita."

#### 5-65 Recital about Sita (28 / 2770)

Lead by Angad, the monkeys offered their salute to Ram, Lakshaman and Sugriv who were seated over *prasravan giri*. They commenced telling the news about Sita, "Goddess Sita is detained in inner zone of Ravan's Lanka. Demonesses on guard keep on threatening her. She has fond love for Ram, and Ravan had allowed her survival for two more months only. She is well without any injury."

When monkeys kept quiet, Ram asked further details of Sita, and wanted to know her attitude towards himself. Monkeys then encouraged Hanuman, who had met her, to take the lead in conversing with Ram. Hanuman offered his southward salute to Sita, and handing over the crest jewel to Ram which he had received from Sita, narrated the details, "Lanka is situated on southern shore of sea. Crossing one hundred *yojan* sea, I



landed in Lanka. I found her in *pramada van*, the central inner part of the city. She is well but immersed in your thought, she is in grip of grief. The demonesses keep on threatening her. Her hair has turned into a single lock. She sleeps on ground and she has nothing to do with Ravan. She has maintained the penance of chastity. I won her confidence when I recited the glory of *Ikshavaku* dynasty to her. I informed her about your friendship with Sugriv.”

Hanuman repeated her message to Ram, “I pray you to recall the story of the crow at *chitrakoot*. I had preserved this crest jewel with great effort. Having this with me I always enjoyed your close proximity to me. Now I part with this to convince you about my meeting Hanuman. I have abiding memory of *mansil* mark which you put over my forehead. I would survive one more month, and thereafter, lose my life at the hands of the demons.”

Narrating the details Hanuman submitted to make all preparations to cross sea forth with.

#### 5-66 Sorrowful Ram (15 / 2785)

Holding the crest jewel by his chest Ram wept bitterly. Lakshaman also wept with him. With great sorrow, Ram spoke to Sugriv, “This crest jewel was a gift of king Janak to Sita on her marriage ceremony. This is a product of ocean, and Indr had gifted it to Janak. As a cow pours milk over calf, similarly my heart melts to see this crest jewel. Having seen this crest jewel, I recall meeting simultaneously my father Dasarath, and king Janak. I feel as if I am in union with Sita now.”

Ram spoke to Hanuman, “If Sita has said that she would stay alive for one more month, it’s a large period. I can’t survive for a moment in her absence. I urge upon you to take me there where you have seen her. Tell me in more details what she intended to convey to me.”

#### 5-67 Sita’s message to Ram (44 / 2829)

As desired by Ram, Hanuman narrated what he had heard from Sita, “Once both of you were sleeping in *chitrakoot*. She got up before you. A crow injured<sup>23</sup> her chest with his beak. When you slept in her lap, the crow again pecked her chest and caused bleeding. You woke up due to her pain, and looking around noticed the crow having blood stained claw. It is learnt that crow was son of Indr who used to move on earth with wind speed. With an intention to punish him you charged a blade of *kush* grass with *brahmashtr*. He sought refuge to gods but none could provide any protection. Finally he fell on your feet and taking mercy on him you spared his life by damaging his right eye only. Thereafter saluting you on earth, and your father in heaven, he went back. Sita wants to convey to you that when you are so much capable, why don’t you charge your infallible shaft

<sup>23</sup> Compare *sarg* 38, *shlok* 24 through 33, with this *sarg* 67, *shlok* 9 through 17.

against the demons. She further sought interference of mighty Lakshaman and wondered why he is sitting quiet. “

Hanuman further continued, “I tried to assure her that your grief had subdued his mind and once he would learn about your location, he would not delay for a moment.”

She gave me her crest jewel which she had kept tied in some cloth. After receiving that when I enlarged my size to take a leap, she held me back saying, “you are fortunate to have a view of lotus eyed Ram and mighty Lakshaman.”

I offered her to ride my back to carry her to you. She turned down my offer mentioning, “For a chaste woman it is not proper to voluntarily touch someone else. My contact with Ravan was forced upon me over which I had no control.” Thereafter she advised me to pray you and Lakshaman to expedite the mission of taking her back. She also asked me to convey this message in presence of Sugriv that demonesses continue torturing her. She saw me off, wishing my auspicious and safe return.

#### 5-68 Sita’s apprehension narrated (29 / 2858)

Hanuman disclosed the doubt haunting in the mind of Sita, “Before I departed she asked me to stay one more day<sup>24</sup> for her satisfaction and to cut down her sorrow.” In continuity of her talk she expressed her doubt, “*Garud, vayu* and you are capable of crossing this sea. I wonder how your other colleagues would cross this vast sea. I understand you alone can bring about the end of all the demons, but Ram will be deprived of earning the credit of ending the dominance of demons. I don’t want the repetition of the thief like act of Ravan, that the way I was brought in stealthily here, I am taken back out in the same fashion. It would be proper if Ram comes himself, and after crushing the demons, I am taken back with dignity.”

Hanuman conveyed further to Ram, “I assured her about the potential of the monkeys in Sugriv’s army. It is a common practice that only an ordinary and junior member of the team is sent as messenger. If I being an ordinary among them can cross the sea where is the question of having doubt about others. Those monkeys in Sugriv’s army have several time visited freely all the places over earth. While coming with the monkey army, I would carry Ram and Lakshaman over my shoulder across sea. Once both the brothers land in Lanka, their infallible shafts would bring about complete elimination of the demons’ race from the earth. After winning you back, and on expiry of his exile period, when Ram would return to Ayodhya, he will soon be crowned as sovereign king. I am sure my reassuring words have brought peace to her mind.”

<sup>24</sup> Contents of *shlok* 3 through 28 of this *sarg* 68 are identical to, (and most of them verbatim repetition of) *shlok* 20, and *shlok* 26 through 50 of *sarg* 39. Some of them are comparable with relevant *shlok* of *sarg* 56 also.

Srimate Ramanujaya namah**Preface**

*Yuudh kand* is the sixth *kand* of *adikavya Valmiki Ramayan*. Some section of devotees take this as the end of *Valmiki Ramayan*, whereas some others take *Uttar Kand* also as part and parcel of it. It is a matter of perception. The coronation of *bhagwan* Ram is completed in the last *sarg* 128 and thereafter the glory of the *Ramayan* is also mentioned in detail, therefore taking it as a logical conclusion of *Ramayan* is well taken.

This *kand* may also be termed as *Vijay kand*. This *kand* has a lot of astrological and astronomical references. The concept of twin stars in *punarvasu* पुनर्वसु and *vishakha* विशाखा is noteworthy. Mars मंगल and Mercury बुध inimical to both of *rohini* रोहिणी and, or moon चंद्रमा appear to be quite relevant. Discussion of auspicious period in . ऊत्तराफाल्गुनी in *sarg* 6-4 indicating favorable moon in front of journey direction is interesting.

The number of *Sarg* and *shlok* in each *kand* are as below:

<i>Bal</i>	77	2266
<i>Ayodhya</i>	119	4310
<i>Aranya</i>	75	2467
<i>Kishkindha</i>	67	2362
<i>sundar</i>	68	2858
<i>yuddh</i>	128	5784
<b>Total</b>	<b>534</b>	<b>20047</b>

The *shlok* 6-72-11<sup>1</sup> is not found in some versions of *Valmiki*. One may refer to *shlok* 6-6-17 / 18, where Ravan expresses his own impression about the divinity of Ram that he is capable of either crossing the ocean, bridging it or drying up. In the background of the *shlok* 6-6-17 / 18, the *shlok* 6-72-11 appears to be relevant. Ravan was actually in doubt about the divinity of Ram at initial stage, but gradually his ignorance was cleared, and through 6-72-11 he accepts his supreme divinity. By this time he has almost lost all his sons except Indrajeet. He was at a point of no return, and therefore, he couldn't move for truce. Upon death of Kumbhakarn, he had expressed his renunciation from the world, and he mentioned that it was of no use to live longer here.

A reference is invited to *sarg* 6-74 where Hanuman jee is shown to visit place of lord *Hayagreev* on the Himalayas. One can visit *aushadh giri* औषध गिरी today at Thiruvahindpuram (also called Thiruvandipuram), near Cuddalore, Tamil Nadu, India. Loard *Hayagreev* हयग्रीव has two manifestations here: one with goddess *Lakshmi* called *Lakshmi – Haygreev* लक्ष्मी हयग्रीव, and the other alone in meditative posture called *Yoga Hayagreev* योग हयग्रीव. Vedantdesik Swami had pleased lord *Haygreev* here with his severe penance. It is said when Hanuman jee carried the herb mountain, a part of it has been placed here with the command of lord *Hayagreev*.

**Srimann Narayan Charnau Sharnam Prapaddye.** (श्रीमन्नारायण चरणौ शरणम् प्रपदे )

Submission:  
Srikrishna Prapnachari

*Falgun Shukl Purnima, Holi,* February 28, 2010

<sup>1</sup> 6-72-11 stands for 6 as *yuddh kand* (6 th *kand*), 72 is *sarg* number of *yuddh kand*, and 11 is *shlok* number in *sarg* 72.

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*Srimate Ramanujaya namah*

## **Yuddh kand**

**(128 sarg)**

### **6-1 Concern about crossing sea (19 / 19)**

Ram was extremely glad to hear the details narrated by Hanuman. He praised Hanuman, "Except three: *garud*, *vayu* and you, nobody is capable of crossing sea. By doing this you have done a great work so far unheard over earth. None of the gods, or among celestial beings can escape alive from Lanka as you have done. There are three categories of attendants. Excellent category, who performs as commanded and something more related to the main command. Medium category, who performs what is commanded, and does not care for some more related aspect of the main one, even if he has ability to perform. Poor category, who doesn't perform what is commanded although he has ability to do that. You belong to the excellent category."

Ram showed his inability to think of a precious gift worthy for Hanuman. Lastly, he said I don't have anything more worthy than my embracing, and saying that he embraced Hanuman within his arms close to his chest.

Turning towards Sugriv, he mentioned, "As reported to me, Sita has rightly expressed her concern about crossing the sea. I am also greatly concerned about that. Do you see any solution to it?"

### **6-2 Sugriv's patience (24 / 43)**

Sugriv demonstrated well composed mind and spoke to Ram, "Our monkeys are quite capable, and only thing we have to do is to take them across sea to Lanka. They have also magical power to transform themselves to the desired form. I seek your sincere advice on devising out a bridge across sea. Let us not be unnecessarily afraid of the problem. There must be some befitting solution to it, which I am sure with your kind blessing we will find out. Our arrival in Lanka itself is indicative of our victory."

### **6-3 Hanuman sought early departure (33 / 76)**

Praising Sugriv for his patience, Ram spoke to Hanuman, "By dint of power of penance I can either bridge the sea or dry it up. In any case, crossing<sup>1</sup> is no issue against my potential. I need to know in detail the strategic forts and army strength of Lanka."

Hanuman described the details, " Lanka is on the southern sea shore and is inaccessible because of vast sea. It has surrounded by mountains, forest, rivers and deep ditches which has made it impregnable. It is situated on mountain top. Wide as well as deep ditches along the ramparts are full of cold water and marine creatures i.e., large fish,

<sup>1</sup> तपसा सेतुबन्धेन सागरोच्छोषणेन च । सर्वथापि समर्थोऽस्मि सागरस्यास्य लङ्घने ।। 6-3-2



crocodiles etc. and it is difficult to cross the ditches. There are four gates, one in each of the cardinal directions. These gates are made of strong doors with provision heavy locking bars. The high ramparts made of gold are beautifully carved with varieties of precious gems, pearls, and coral pieces. The guard standing on four gates has the strength: east – ten thousand with tridents and swords; south – one hundred thousand in all four categories i.e., cavalry, elephants, chariots, and infantry; west – one million with swords; north – one hundred million with chariots and horses. The central Lanka has above ten million strong warriors. All the four gates have provision of showering rocks and arrows over enemies preventing their easy entry to Lanka. The entry to the gates is managed by moving bridges across the deep ditches. These bridges have mechanical control, and as the situation demands, they can be folded up restricting the crossing of the ditches.”

Hanuman mentioned, “During my recent operation in Lanka, I destroyed the ramparts, and ditches have been filled up. About one quarter of the army has also been eliminated. Besides, majority of weapon stores have been burnt to ashes.”

Assessing the strength of demons he mentioned, “We hardly need large army. Angad, Jambvan, Dwid, Maind, Panas, Nal and Neel are enough to kill all the demons. Once we are there, we can easily win Lanka, and take back Sita. Now kindly permit us to depart in an auspicious *muhurt* to the sea shore.”

#### 6-4 Departure to sea shore (121 / 197)

Consenting to Hanuman’s proposal, Ram announced, “Let us move in the mid of the day today itself without any delay. Every day’s noon is said to be having *vijay muhurth* which is auspicious for journey. Today is *uttraphalguni*<sup>2</sup> *nakshatr* (6-4-5) and tomorrow moon will enter into *hasta nakshtr*. We should make a move today in *uttraphalguni* itself. I have noticed auspicious omens. The pulsating upper right eyelid indicates coming of good days ahead. We shall sure win the demons.”

Sugriv and Lakshaman were glad to hear his announcement. Ram further advised, “Let Neel, being the army chief, proceed as advance contingent with one hundred thousand of monkeys setting the way forward. He should identify comfortable route full of fruits, honey and drinking water for the following army. The route should provide ample shed of trees for tired army to relax. He should take full precaution in observing whether the enemy demons had treacherously poisoned the sources of water and honey, or fruits. He should also be watchful to gather information about enemy’s gathering in some hide out, who may attack on our army unaware from the rear side.”

<sup>2</sup> Leaving first quarter, in the balance three quarters of *uttraphalguni* *उत्तरा फाल्गुनी नक्षत्र*, the moon enters into *kanya* (virgo) *rashi* *कन्या राशि* of zodiac sign, and it stays in *kanya* *कन्या राशि* for full of *hasta nakshatr* *हस्ता नक्षत्र* and half of *chitra nakshatra* *चित्रा नक्षत्र*. The moon of virgo *कन्या राशि* is said to occupy the south, and if moon falls in front while travelling, it is considered most auspicious. The journey for sea shore is south bound, therefore, moon of *uttraphalguni* (except its first quarter) *उत्तरा फाल्गुनी नक्षत्र* being of south shall lie in front. This is the earliest possible occurrence of auspicious period for journey to south when moon lies in front.

Considering full safety and protection in mind, he further made the strategic formation of the main army, “The main army shall be lead by Gaj, Gavay, and Gavaksh. Rishabh will move on the right protecting the army, while left side shall be protected by Gandhmadan. Jambvan, Sushen, and Vegdarshi shall be in-charge of the rear guard. I would enjoy the shoulders of Hanuman (like *airavat* ऐरावत of *Indr* ईन्द्र), while Lakshaman shall be on the shoulders of Angad (like *sarvbhaum* सार्वभौम elephant of *kuber* कुबेर ). With Sugriv, I and Lakshaman shall remain in the centre, and shall maintain watch over the entire moving army.”

Following Ram's strategic formations, soon they made the departure. The monkeys enjoyed the journey by entering into several games and body jokes. Someone uprooted a tree and carried that as a club over his shoulder. A few were seen suddenly mounting the shoulder of some other monkey who in turn gave a vigorous jerk to throw the monkey from shoulder to ground. With full entertainment, the army, thus continued proceeding towards south. They moved past *sahyagiri* mountain range. The moving contingent carefully avoided passing through the living settlements of human beings.

Ram and Lakshaman mounted over Hanuman and Angad respectively, looked like sun and moon, in conjunction<sup>3</sup> with the largest of the planets (6-4-41) (viz., Jupiter and Venus). Lakshaman had a feeling of good omens. He spoke to Ram, “I have noticed several auspicious things indicating better days ahead. Cool breeze, sweet and mild sound of the birds and animals are noteworthy. Sun is bright but pleasing. Venus<sup>4</sup> is on our back (6-4-48). The constellation of seven stars of sages is seen happily giving round of the brilliant pole star. Among several stars in the sky, royal sage *Trishanku*, one of the forefathers of *Ikshavaku* dynasty is present with sage *Vashishth* in our front (6-4-49). The asterism of *vishakha* विशाखा, considered as auspicious for *Ikshavaku* house, is free from afflictions of any of the malefic stars. *Mula nakshatr* मूल नक्षत्र is known favourable for demons, and its deity is *nirrti* निरृति; this asterism is currently afflicted by *dhumketu* धूमकेतु, (6-4-51) malefic comet. This is indicative of impending calamity over demons.”

Without any break, the contingent kept on moving<sup>5</sup> day and night (6-4-68 /69). The impressive size of the strong contingent is indicated by one of the events that when they crossed any river, water current not only stopped rather began flowing in reverse direction, i.e., towards upstream side. On way, the presence of abundant number of varieties of fruits and flowers bearing trees, lakes covered with lotuses reverberating with chirping birds, suggested the country was rich in readily available natural resources.

<sup>3</sup> This example has dual purpose. It also indicates that at that time moon was in conjunction with Jupiter. Sun together with Venus occupied the same zodiac sign.

<sup>4</sup> Venus (शुक्र) is known as one eyed, and from consideration of *sakun* (शकुन propriety of omen), auspicious position of one eyed person is always on back, so that he is not visible in the forward direction of the movement. View of one eyed person while on journey is indicative of bad omen.

<sup>5</sup> This is confirmed by the description of disposition of various night stars (viz., constellation of seven stars of sages, and Venus) by Lakshaman.

Besides delicious fruits, the monkeys enjoyed drinking the readily available honey over the trees, and crystal clear water of the lakes.

Crossing *sahya* and *malaya* mountain ranges, Ram arrived at *mahendra giri* abutting close on the sea shore. He heard the roaring tides of the sea, and noticed varieties of marine creatures leaping with the tides. The sea and sky had comparable features. They apparently looked like meeting each other at a remote distance. The stars in the sky were like gems of the sea. The drifting clouds of the sky, were like tides of the sea. The sound of splashing tides in sea, were like gods trumpeting in sky. Coming to sea shore, the contingent of monkeys, also looked like another sea characterized by light golden colour. Their sound subdued the sound of the tides. They took their position according to their group in which they had been moving.

Settling them down, Ram proposed, “Now let us relax here. We will have to find out way for crossing the sea. Disregarding the formidable dimension of the issue, I am sure we will soon have the solution.”

#### 6-5 Sita remembered (23 / 220)

While looking towards sea, Ram recalled the sweet memory of Sita. He mentioned to Lakshaman, “The ignition of her separation is continuously on rise. The sorrow is known to subdue with time, but reverse is the case with me. I can’t tolerate the heat, and to cool it down, I would like to take shelter in deep sea water. I am more worried of the fast lapsing of the time period fixed for her life. I wonder how she would have been pulling with the devil demonesses. O Royal daughter of Janak, and lovely daughter-in-law of Dasarth! How you would have been spending your night there! When shall I be able to tear apart the chest of Ravan?”

Pondering thus, the day came to its end, and as sun was setting down, Ram performed his normal *sandhya vandan*.

#### 6-6 Ravan sought advice (18 / 238)

Ravan’s mind was haunted by the ravages caused by Hanuman. He called the meeting of the royal council and addressing its members sought their counsel, “It is really shocking that a monkey entered Lanka, met Sita, and left the city causing untold misery. He killed the selected warriors and razed the city to dust. We are here to think seriously about this. I am sure Ram would cross the sea<sup>6</sup> and arrive in Lanka with his brother and monkeys’ army. He would either dry up the sea, or would find out some alternative solution (6-6-17/18).”

Ravan considered several aspects of advice, “ I know about three categories of persons. Those who seek counsel of his well wishers and friends and act accordingly are of excellent category. One who ponders over the issue alone, takes decision, and

<sup>6</sup> तरिष्यति च सुव्यक्तं राघवः सागरं सुखम् । तरसा युक्तरूपेण सानुजः सबलानुगः । । समुद्रमुच्छोषयति वीर्येणान्यत्करोति वा । 6-6-17 / 18

implements on his own is of medium category. Those who, without weighing the pros and cons, take decision alone of doing a work, without seeking blessing of gods, and leaves the work undone, are of poor category. The advice is also of three categories. The advice which is decided unanimously by all is of excellent category. The one which is initially opposed by some section of advisors but later receives unanimous support is of medium category. When an idea is opposed by all, and diverse opinions are presented, but later receives the full support is bound to be of poor category.”

Quoting as above, Ravan proposed, “My aim of discussing with you is to arrive at an excellent course of action. How should we prepare ourselves against the impending situation?”

### 6-7 Confident demons (25 / 263)

Hearing Ravan’s query and concern, the demons unanimously expressed their confidence, and reminded Ravan of his high potential. They mentioned, “We need to assess our potential well, and taking a look at the past performances we are sure of our victory. Kuber, known for his close friendship with Shiv has been easily vanquished by you, and you captured his *viman* (air chariot). The snakes of Bhogavatipuri had surrendered before you. The great demon, Maya मय impressed by your potential made you friend, and offered his daughter to you. Mighty demon, Madhu, your brother-in-law married to your sister kumbhnasi, has become your protégé. You have subjugated all the mighty demons under your rule. The four fold army of warrior sons of Varun had been easily crushed by you. The deadly *yamlok* (death world) has seen your stirring strength. The renowned *khastriya* of earth had already been defeated by you. Let there be no concern about this ordinary Ram. We are sure you will easily kill him.”

The demons further recalled the prowess demonstrated by Indrajeet, “In full presence of the strong army of gods, Indrajeet alone captured Indr, and kept him imprisoned in Lanka. When we have Indrajeet among us you need not worry about such trifling issue. He has earned immense power on performing *maheshwar ygya*, and he can alone kill Ram and his monkey army before they land in Lanka.”

### 6-8 Conceited demons (24 / 287)

*Prahast* expressed his confidence with folded hands to Ravan, “We have defeated gods, demons, *gandharv*, monsters, eagles, and snakes and in their comparison, these two ascetics can hardly stand our attack. We were unaware, and therefore, that monkey deceitfully demonstrated his impudence otherwise, I wouldn’t have spared his life. I wait for your command, and I promise to make this world including all mountains, sea, and forests without monkey. You shouldn’t be worried about Sita’s abduction that by doing this you have *done anything wrong*.”

*Durmukh* termed the impudence of Hanuman as unpardonable offence and he sought permission to cause elimination of all the monkeys from all the places on earth.

*Vajradanshtr*, wielding his blood soaked iron baton, spoke in great anger, “I ignore the poor monkey Hanuman, and crave to eliminate using my deadly baton Ram, Lakshaman and Sugriv without any delay. Alternatively, selected warriors among us, using art of sorcery, should form a group of humans, and meet Ram saying that Bharat has sent us for his assistance. Believing us, Ram would march with monkeys. We would then taking our position in sky shower rocks, and our deadly weapons over them. This would thus easily eliminate the monkeys as well as Ram and Lakshaman.”

*Nikumbh*, son of *Kumbhakarn*, asked the permission that he would go alone and eliminate Ram, Lakshaman, Sugriv, Hanuman and other monkeys.

*Vajrahanu*, having mountainous body, licking his blood stained lips, asserted, “Kindly allow me, and I would alone devour all of them. None of you has to be concerned about this.”

### 6-9 Vibhishan’s advice (23 / 310)

The valiant warriors, *Nikumbh*, *Rabhas*, *Suryasatru*, *Suptaghn*, *Ygyakop*, *Mahaparshv*, *Mahodar*, *Agniketu*, *Rashmiketu*, *Indrajeet*, *Prahast*, *Virupaksh*, *Vajrdanshtr*, *Dhumraksh*, *Atikaya* and *Durmukh* equipped with their deadly weapons rushed close to Ravan and sought his permission to allow them to move forthwith and eliminate the enemy.

Vibhishan interfered and pacifying them brought them back to their seats. He, then stood up leaving his seat, and with folded hands submitted to Ravan, “Use of force is required when three known policies<sup>7</sup> of साम conciliation (praise), दान gift, and भेद dissension fail to yield result. We should not underestimate our enemy. Ram is fully alert, and the monkey called Hanuman who came crossing the vast sea should not be taken as a trifling. If we attack without assessing them properly we may invite unwarranted trouble on us.”

He further analyzed the prevailing situation, “If we are excited to retaliate the death of Khar, I take this our another wrong approach. Ram didn’t attack over Khar, it was Khar who made an attack and was killed when Ram resorted to his self protection. The abduction of Sita, consequent to killing of Khar, is a wrong step and I propose to return Sita to Ram. For sake of wellbeing of prosperous Lanka, it would be proper that before Ram makes an attack Sita should be returned to him.”

Addressing Ravan, politely he submitted, “O My respectful elder brother! You should discard anger, and adopt the course of righteousness, and this only can bring about our well being.”

Hearing Vibhishan’s advice, Ravan dispersed the meeting, and went to his inner palace.

<sup>7</sup> साम दान भेद दंड conciliation, gift, dissension, and punishment are the four famous royal strategies of statecraft.

### 6-10 Vibhishan visited Ravan (29 / 339)

Next day in the morning, Vibhishan again made an attempt to convince Ravan, and with this objective he visited his palace. Ravan's palace was like a brilliant mountain top, and after crossing series of beautifully decorated gates and several grand halls, he reached where Ravan was seated with his closest ministers. When he arrived, Brahmins were about to finish auspicious recitations (*swasti vachan* स्वस्ति वाचन ) to ensure his victory. The Brahmins were holding the bowls of yogurt दही and ghee घी. They were honoured with sprinkling of holy rice and flowers over them.

On his arrival Vibhishan was duly respected, and thereafter, he offered his auspicious salutation to Ravan, "Hail to the venerable master!". Responding his salutation, Ravan indicated him to take his specified seat. Pleasing Ravan with his humble words, Vibhishan made a submission, "From the moment Sita has been brought in Lanka, I notice occurrences of several bad omens: (i) contrary to the common experience, when the wooden pieces are rubbed to produce fire in the oblation square, they produce more smoke than fire, (ii) the oblation fire has prevalence of smoke than fire, (iii) cows have reduced the yield of milk, (iii) jackals cry in morning and evening near the palaces, (iv) asses, donkeys and horses shed tears, (v) snakes are seen at oblation squares, (vi) swarm of ants creep into the oblation stuff, (vii) crows in groups crow harshly over the palaces, (viii) vultures perch over the palace terraces. Such notices don't auger well for us. I therefore pray you to return Sita to her husband Ram."

Ravan burst with anger, "Vibhishan, I don't find any cause of fear and nervousness. Ram will never get back his wife Sita. Even if he seeks help of Indr and other gods, he can't get Sita."

Saying thus, he dispersed the meeting, and saw off his brother, Vibhishan.

### 6-11 Ravan in royal court (31 / 370)

Anxiety to make Sita his own life partner had been permanently haunting in the mind of Ravan. Having failed to attain his goal, apparently he looked weak. With a view to materialize his objective at the earliest he thought of eliminating his enemy, and therefore he wanted to discuss it with his ministers and members of the royal council. Riding a magnificent chariot, pulled by horses, he left for the royal conference hall. His movement was announced by customary sound of trumpets and conch. The sound of the moving wheels of his chariot was heard all over Lanka. His advance escort was large infantry equipped with swords and other weapons. The rear guard consisted of cavalry, and chariots equipped with varieties of weapons.

White brilliant umbrella over his head on the chariot was made of gold and precious gems. He was flanked by attendants holding precious silver and gold *chavar* fanning lightly on his sides. On way people kept greeting him with folded hands standing on the shoulders of the main street.

He arrived in the conference hall which was an excellent creation of *viswakarma* (celestial architect). The floors and walls were beautifully decorated with gold, silver and other precious gems. The welcome carpet was made of cushion silk having golden embroideries. His splendorous throne had cover to his seat with soft deer skin. The hall was permeated with scented fragrance of sandal and incenses. When he took his seat, he commanded to invite all the council members. The messengers moved swiftly from house to house inviting the elite council members.

Soon the members arrived riding their chariots, and parking them at suitable places, moved on foot inside the conference hall. Their entry resembled as if scores of lions were entering a cave. Being inside the hall, they offered their respect to Ravan holding his feet, and hailing him to be victorious. They continued occupying their respective seats. The arrival of Vibhishan was marked by his splendid chariot pulled by horses. Entering the conference hall, he uttered his name, and offered his salutation to the feet of the demon king. Soon after Vibhishan, followed Prahast and Shuk who repeated what Vibhishan had done. They were all offered their respective seats.

#### 6-12 Demons' deliberations (40 / 410)

Ravan commanded army chief, Prahast, to immediately depute able guards at suitable locations inside and outside the city. Prahasta moved out, and implementing the king's command of posting the guards appropriately, he returned and reported to Ravan what he had done.

When Prahast took his seat, Ravan addressed the councilors, "Whenever crisis had arisen affecting the performance of *dharm* (duty), attainment of *arth* (wealth), and fulfillment of *kam* (facilities), I have received worthy suggestions through this council. As moon is served by planets, and *Indr* by *marudgan*, I also cherish to continue receiving your active support. I intended to summon this council earlier but due to absence of Kumbhakarn I couldn't do that. We all know after lapse of six months of his sleep, he is now awake. I have abducted Sita, wife of Ram, from Janasthan. I wanted to make her my wife but the ill fated woman didn't favour to oblige me. I tell you, there is no beautiful woman on this earth comparable to Sita. She is like an idol carved from gold purposefully created by the magic of Mayasur मयासुर . She is well composed, sweet and the beauty of autumn moon is inferior to her charming face."

Describing his state of mind Ravan mentioned, "I am afflicted by her charming gaze and I can't afford to forget her. She<sup>8</sup> had sought one year period awaiting Ram's arrival. I am extremely immersed in the lust for Sita, so much so that whether in sleep, awake, in anger or pleasure I am not able to keep her away from my mind. You are aware of the dare devil deeds of a monkey who caused immense damage to Lanka. It is learnt Ram,

<sup>8</sup> Ravan had lied here in the council, as would be evident from the succeeding *sarg* 13. In fact, afraid of a curse, he couldn't touch Sita with lust, and on his own he had granted one year mercy period to Sita after which he would prefer to kill her. *Arany kand sarg* 56, *shlok* 24 / 25 may also be referred.

and Lakshaman have arrived at the sea shore, but how they will cross the vast sea! I am not scared of them, but we need to deliberate upon this today. I have been greatly benefited by your support in the past during the war of gods and demons.”

Picking up from Ravan, Kumbhakarn expressed his view point, “You didn’t seek our counsel before abducting Sita. Your act of abducting her is sinful, and condemnable for a king of your stature. Before indulging in such act you should have thought the pros and cons of it. Stealing away someone’s wife deceitfully is unpardonable. I am surprised, how you survived so far the anger of Ram. Anyway, you are our king, and I have to support you. As birds look for a shortcut tunnel in the *kronch*<sup>9</sup> mountain, it would be advisable to observe the weak points of the enemy. I assure you that with my mountainous body, alone I would face them in the battle field. Ram would shoot one shaft, and before he would charge the second one, getting hold of him, I would drink his blood. I would kill all of them, and eat away in the battle field. You needn’t worry anymore about this; go and relax.”

### 6-13 Compulsion of a curse (21 / 431)

Mahaparsva was a renowned warrior and he advised Ravan, “You shouldn’t seethe in the fire of lust for Sita. You should forcibly drag her to your bed and enjoy her. If any situation arises, we would support Kumbhakarn and Indrajeet to ward off calamity. In presence of these two warriors, who would dare cause any harm upon us.”

Reacting to Mahaparsv’s advice, Ravan mentioned, “I suffer from a curse of Brahma. Punjikasthala, a celestial girl, was once on way to the abode of Brahma, and seeing me around, she moved cautiously. She couldn’t escape my eyes, and getting hold of her, I made her naked, and satisfied my lust forcibly. When Brahma saw her in pitiable condition of a smashed lotus, he came to know the details. He spoke to me, “Ravan, in future, if you force your passion upon any woman, your head will splinter into hundred pieces leading to your tragic end.”

Ravan, subsequently, did his self appraisal, “My impulse and motion beat the power of sea and wind. Hundreds of shafts travel from my bow in a wink of eye. Unaware of my potential Ram is coming close to my range.”

### 6-14 Vibhishan repeated his submission (22 / 453)

Vibhishan couldn’t restrain himself, and spoke to Ravan, “Sita is a poisonous snake. Her bit is incurable. Before Ram comes over us, and we are sent to the death world, I would pray you to return Sita to him. None from the warriors group of Indrajeet, Kumbhakarn, Mahaparsv, Mahodar, Nikumbh, Kumbh, and Atikaya would be able to protect you against Ram. If gods like Varuna, Indr and Yam hide you in their lap, you won’t be able to escape the wrath of Ram.”

<sup>9</sup> Once, *Katrikeya* had made a tunnel with his spear in the impregnable *kronch* mountain, which facilitated later short cut travel of birds. (Refer *Mahabharat shalya parv* 46)



Prahast interfered and expressed the invincibility of demons, to which Vibhishan again expressed his doubt, "Ram is a righteous person, and righteousness always wins. You people are biased and blind. I can't escape from my responsibility of forewarning the demon king about the impending danger. Sita should be immediately surrendered to Ram."

#### **6-15 Indrajeet ridiculed Vibhishan (14 / 467)**

Indrajeet was not convinced by the utterances of Vibhishan. He spoke, "In our family, this younger uncle is a coward. He is devoid of valiance, courage and boldness to face an enemy. I imprisoned Indr and brought him from sky to earth. Holding *airavat* elephant by its tusks, I had thrown that on earth. All the gods had deserted the battlefield when I had challenged them. In the background of such a valorous past, why are you afraid of these two simple humans."

Vibhishan retorted Indrajeet, "Yet you are a child. Maturity is far away from you. You don't have humility and humble words for others. Your this impudence would put all of us in peril. You haven't experienced the strength of the shafts coming from the bow of Ram. I wish you could have realized the gravity of the situation and advised the demon king with a saner mind."

#### **6-16 Departure of Vibhishan (26 / 493)**

Ravan didn't take the words of Vibhishan in good taste. He rebuked him, "Although you from my family you act like an agent of enemy. It is true that members of closer family have been traitors. The rise of a given member of a family is hardly acceptable to other members. You also suffer from the same trait of jealousy. The old saying about elephants is quite relevant that out of jealousy, one of the family members misguides the other mighty one causing his fall in the trap of the hunter. There is one more example. After bath, an idiot elephant showers dust over his body, similarly company of a low minded is not worth keeping. Vibhishan! Today, if someone else would have been in your place, I would have killed him."

Vibhishan realized, "The demon king is bent upon to embrace the end." Holding his mace, he immediately left the council accompanied by four other righteous demons. Standing in the sky, he addressed, "Ravan! You have humiliated me, but I don't mind this because you are my elder brother, and I beg pardon for trying to reason you around righteousness. I still remind you that you have been trapped by sweet words of your courtiers who don't dare to tell you the truth. I understand you have lost your sense of discriminating who is your enemy, and who is your well wisher. Being a close member of the same family, I dare forewarn you against the lurking end of the demons race. Alas! My words have met deaf ear. Now, with due humility, I am determined to desert this land."

**6-17 Vibhishan arrived to sea shore (68 / 561)**

Deserting the company of Ravan, Vibhishan along with four other demons arrived through sky route on the northern sea shore where Ram had stayed with his monkey army. He was well dressed and had a radiant personality. Four other demons who had come with him were equally impressive in their physique.

In the meanwhile, Sugriv with other monkeys saw those five demons coming towards them in the sky. Sugriv having a look at them, spoke to Hanuman and others, "These demons are coming to kill us." Hearing Sugriv's first hand reaction, the monkeys immediately picked up rocks and trees and asked Sugriv's permission to kill those demons in sky itself.

Vibhishan, paused for a while in the sky, and addressed the monkeys, "I am Vibhishan, younger brother of demon king Ravan. The devil demon king, killing righteous Jatayu, had abducted Sita deceitfully and continues to detain her in Lanka. I advised him several times to return Sita to Ram but he didn't heed my words. Ignoring my advice, he treated me like a servant and humiliated me. Leaving my wife and children in Lanka, I have come to seek shelter with Ram. I request you to inform him, about my arrival as a protégé to him."

Sugriv paced up to Ram and informed him about arrival of Vibhishan. He also mentioned to Ram, "We shouldn't trust our enemy. Demons are known for the deceitful and transformed body. We don't know who are they. In the name of shelter they will stay with us, and after studying all our strategic preparations, either they can attack on us, or convey the clue to the enemy camp. They can also instill dissension among our group of monkeys. Therefore, I advise to imprison them. Since he is brother of devil Ravan, I would prefer to kill him along with his four ministers."

Hearing Sugriv, Ram spoke to Hanuman and other monkeys, "We have heard Sugriv. I request all of you to advise me on this issue."

As desired by Ram, Angad mentioned, "We need to test them first, and thereafter, we should decide about the future course of action."

After Angad, Sarabh advised to depute a spy on them, and thereafter the decision could be taken.

Jambvan advised, "Ravan is a great devil. The arrival of Vibhishan is always doubtful, because his arrival now, at this place does not have any relevance."

Maind picked up, and mentioned, "He is younger brother of Ravan. Let us first treat him with sweet words with a view to win his mind, enabling us to assess his intention."

Lastly Hanuman submitted, "I don't think there is any scope of putting spy on them. Normally spy is sent to a remote place, and since they are here with us, there is no use spying them. Moreover, they have disclosed their identity and intention, in that case what

else we expect from a spy. As regards the appropriateness of time and place of their arrival, I disagree to the earlier proposal. He mentioned, "Hearing about killing of Vali and subsequent coronation of Sugriv as a king, Vibhishan could also have arrived here with an aim to rise to the throne of Lanka when Ravan is killed. From all considerations, I propose to accept Vibhishan in our fold."

### 6-18 Ram granted interview to Vibhishan (39 / 600)

Hearing Hanuman, Ram became very glad and expressed his view, "If someone has come as a friend, he is always acceptable even if he suffers from some shortcomings." Reacting to Ram's opinion, Sugriv quipped back, "Lord! I disregard whether he is evil minded or good minded; my point is that at this juncture of time, if he has deserted his brother, how is he going to be trustworthy to others!" Ram praised Sugriv's imagination and mentioned, "There are two types of threats in the royal family, one from the outside neighbor, and the other from within the close family members. Vibhishan could have felt the threat of life from his own kith and kin. His surrender to us suggests that close family of the demon king suffers from inside threat, and if we accept him, we would be able to sow dissension among the demons. Besides, we may be benefited by the matured wisdom of Vibhishan."

Lakshaman, offering salutation to Ram said, "To me he seems to be an agent of Ravan, and he must be arrested." Supporting Lakshaman's view, Sugriv further added, "Vibhishan has come with an evil design, and after winning our confidence, he might make a lethal attack either on you, or Lakshaman or on me. I recommend killing of these five demons."

Ram wanted to clear the suspicion from the mind of Sugriv and he asserted<sup>10</sup>, "If I wish, I would kill all the demons, monsters, and *yaksh* using the tip of my one finger." He quoted an exemplary story of a pigeon who offered his life for the comfort of the guest, although the guest was the hunter who had trapped earlier his consort. Despite this, male pigeon offered the guest his own meat to ensure his satisfaction. If a bird can maintain the spirit of hospitality, being a human being, I should not hesitate in accepting Vibhishan as a guest. There is another example from the sayings of the sage *Kandu*, son of *Kanv*, that even if an enemy solicits mercy, it must be granted, and he should not be assaulted. If someone ignores this practice of providing shelter to one who has surrendered, he is bound to destroy his own hard earned *punya*."

Ram expressed his firmness, "I promise that if one seeks my protection<sup>11</sup>, saying 'I know you only' I keep him fear free from all the beings of this world. Therefore, whether he is Vibhishan or Ravan himself, I grant mercy, and he should be permitted to be with us."

<sup>10</sup> This assertion is assertion of Ram's supreme divinity. पिशाचान् दानवान् यक्षान् पृथ्व्यां चैव राक्षसान् । अङ्गुल्यग्रेण तान् हन्यामिच्छन् हरिगणेश्वर  
|| 6-18-23. One may refer *shlok* 6-6-17 / 18, where Ravan expresses his own impression about the divinity of Ram that he is capable of either crossing the ocean, bridging it or drying up.

<sup>11</sup> सकृदेव प्रपन्नाय तवास्मीति च याचते । अभयं सर्वभूतेभ्यो ददाम्येतद् व्रतं मम । | 6-18-33

Praising Ram for his magnanimity, Sugriv readily accepted his command and said, "When I reflect a little upon Vibhishan, I found him a clear hearted person. He must be initiated in our group as one of us, and shall receive warmth of friendship from all of us."

Appreciating free consent of Sugriv, Ram stepped forward to welcome Vibhishan, as if Indr came forward to receive *garud*.

### 6-19 Vibhishan's coronation (41 / 641)

Getting permission of Ram, Vibhishan landed with his four friends, and prostrating over the feet of Ram, spoke to him, "I am Vibhishan, younger brother of Ravan. O, Protector of all the beings! Being humiliated by Ravan, I have come seeking refuge in you."<sup>12</sup>.

With his sweet words, Ram encouraged Vibhishan. Continuing his conversation, he looked affectionately at him, and enquired about the strength of the demons. Describing in detail Vibhishan mentioned to Ram, "Ravan has a boon from Brahma that he can't be killed by any of *nag*, *gandharv*, and birds. Younger to Ravan, and elder to me is Kumbhakarn, who is mighty and valorous like Indr. Indrajeet, son of Ravan, has pleased fire god, and has been blessed to fight with the enemy keeping himself invisible. He uses gloves of snake's skin, and is protected by an impregnable shield over his body. Army chiefs of Ravan are Prahast, Mahodar, Mahaparsv, and Akampan. Prahast is so mighty that while fighting at Kailas he had defeated Manibhadr, the army chief of Kuber. The demons in Lanka eat meat and drink blood. Their total number is more than ten crore<sup>13</sup> thousand, i.e., one hundred billion."

Hearing the details from Vibhishan, Ram mentioned, "I would eliminate Prahast, Ravan with his sons, and would enthrone you as king of Lanka. He won't be spared even if he hides himself in the lap of Brahma. I swear in the name of my three brothers that without killing Ravan and his supporters I won't enter in Ayodhya."

Responding to Ram, Vibhishan assured him full support, and mentioned that if need be he would fight for his cause splitting through the demons' army in Lanka. Pleased by his pledge, Ram embraced him, and asked Lakshaman to arrange for coronation of Vibhishan as king of demons. Lakshaman, getting sea water, performed the coronation of Vibhishan in presence of monkeys who produced uproarious sound of joy to greet him as demons king.

Hanuman and Sugriv, while chatting with Vibhishan enquired how to cross the vast sea. Vibhishan advised, "Sea has gained the vast shape by the efforts of the great emperor Sagar, an illustrious king of Ram's dynasty. Therefore Ram should pray sea to give him way." When Sugriv conveyed Vibhishan's advice to Ram, he consented to it, and asked Sugriv to think about this. Lakshaman and Sugriv pondering over it, advised Ram to go

<sup>12</sup> भवन्तं सर्वभूतानां शरण्यं शरणं गतः । 6-19-4

<sup>13</sup> One crore ( कोटि ) is equal to ten million

by the advice of Vibhishan without any further delay. Soon Ram, seating over a *kush* mat commenced his prayer to sea.

### 6-20 Ravan's spy Shuk (34/ 675)

Shardul was one of the spies of the demon king Ravan. He happened to see the sea like army of monkeys and bears. He rushed to Ravan and informed him, "Ten *yojan* of land on the northern sea shore has been fully occupied by the monkey army lead by Sugriv. Two sons of Dasartha, Ram and Lakshaman have impressive personality and look like great warriors. My advice is either to return Sita or send spies to take precise stalk of their strategy. Alternatively, the spies should try to cause dissension and win over Sugriv to your side."

Ravan called one of the learned spies, Shuk and asked him to go to Sugriv and convey him his message in sweet words, "O king of monkeys, Sugriv! If I haven't caused any good to you, it is sure I have done any harm also. By abducting Sita, I never did any harm to you. Please go back to Kishkindha, because none of the monkeys would be able to cross the vast sea. Lanka is inaccessible to gods and gandharv and what to talk of monkeys."

Shuk, in the guise of a parrot, crossed the sea and coming close to Sugriv repeated the message of Ravan to him from the sky itself. Monkeys also heard him, and they gathered at a place, and intended to catch him to tear his wings apart. Soon they jumped in the sky, and catching hold of him, began tearing his wings. He cried aloud attracting the attention of Ram, and pleaded, "I am a messenger of Ravan, and a messenger's killing is a sin." On Ram's interference he was liberated. While staying in sky again, he requested Sugriv for his reply to the demon king Ravan.

Sugriv asked Shuk to convey to Ravan, "By killing aged Jatayu he considers himself a great warrior. If he was confident of his strength, why didn't he wait to face Ram and Lakshaman. He is neither my friend, nor my well wisher, and never deserves any compassion. Like Vali his death is imminent. Soon we will storm over Lanka and destroy the entire city with Ravan and his supporters. Against Ram, none of the gods including Indr, and Mahadev would ever come to his rescue. Being a sinner, he didn't realize the divinity of Ram, who is beyond the imagination all the gods ( महाबलं महात्मानं दुराधर्षं सुरैरपि । न बुध्यसे रघुश्रेष्ठं ..... । 6-20-28)."

Angad interfered and spoke, "He is not a messenger, rather he is a spy, and a spy when caught red handed deserves death punishment. By standing in the sky he has observed the strategic formations of our army, and he would report it to the enemy." Hearing Angad, monkeys once again caught him and dragged him down over ground. While Shuk was being mercilessly tortured by the monkeys, he again cried to seek Ram's favor. Ram advised them to release Shuk as he had visited the place as a messenger and not as a spy.

### 6-21 Ram in wrath over sea (35 / 710)

Praying sea, Ram had lied over *kush* mat. His mighty right arm was his pillow. Before coming to exile, his arms used to be decorated with precious jewels and sandal paste. Now on sea shore the same arm was lying bare on ground. Concentrating to please sea, the master of all the rivers, Ram spent three nights in complete silence. Lastly, he spoke to Lakshaman, "Peace, mercy, simplicity, and sweet words are the jewels of good persons. But devils taking these traits as weaknesses, continues to be in a conceited state. Those who assail good or bad alike, and tackle with cruelty others irrespective of any consideration, are honoured in society. Despite my continued prayer sea didn't bother to show up, and therefore, without delay I must use the force. Conciliation does not work with the devils. Bring my bow and arrow."

Getting his bow and arrows, Ram shot a fiery shaft causing great chaos in the sea. The marine creatures were threatened with their ultimate end. The sea tides had a whirling twist. When he was to shoot another arrow, Lakshaman interfered, and requested him for a restraint seeking some other alternative than to take the disastrous step. Sages and gods also cried in the sky and solicited restraint from Ram.

### 6-22 Bridge across sea (89 / 799)

Angry Ram couldn't restrain himself, and thought aloud, "My arrow will now dry up this inert sea, facilitating walking of monkeys to Lanka. The store of gems, creatures, and unfathomable water will soon be converted into vast desert of dry sand." Thereafter, he drew a brilliant shaft, and the moment he commenced charging that as *brahmasht*, ब्रह्माश्र indicators of incidence of great chaos in the universe became visible. Sun became oblique to his route, and though he was in sky, there was darkness all around. Mountains began shaking, sea water was on flames, and marine creatures felt imminent end of their life.

Lo and behold! Sea in person appeared over water surface. His complexion was bluish, and he was wrapped in red silk robe with red flower garland around his neck. He had varieties of jewels over various organs, and excellent gold crown over his head. Similar to *kaustabh* कौस्तुभ, his pearl garland had a brilliant gem shining over his chest. The head crown had a garland of multi coloured flowers. Surrounded by rivers, manifested in persons, he came to Ram and submitted, "Earth, wind, sky, and fire have their inherent characteristics. If they quit those characteristics there would be a chaos in the creation and would be devoid of any discipline. While maintaining due honour to this natural discipline, I would devise a way out to take across safely the entire monkey army."

Ram asked him to advise, "His shaft loaded on the string would never go in vain without hitting any target. Now sea has to indicate the appropriate target for this."

Sea submitted, "On my north, in the country of *Drumkulya* (द्रुमकुल्य ), there reside dreadful people who not only take undue advantage of my water rather they torture the creatures unjustly. It is better to target them." As advised, Ram shot his arrow which dried up the

said land of all rivers and lakes, and killed the deadly people. Instead a deep well full of sea water was created. Ram also blessed the land to possess varieties of medicinal herbal plants for the well being of the people of other countries. Abundance of milk and its products shall be available from this land. He called the land by the name *Marukantar* (मरुकान्तार) . It would be free of diseases and shall always be permeated with the sweet herbal fragrance.

Having achieved his objective, sea spoke to Ram, “Nal is with you. His father has blessed him with a great art of crafting any structure. He is capable of raising a bridge across vast sea, and I would provide due support to the bridge.”, and saying thus, sea disappeared.

Nal, rising up, paid his respect to Ram, and gladly accepted the assignment. He further spoke, “Shear out of fear, sea had appeared and disclosed the clue. He could have also appeared earlier as a mark of obligation of the king Sagar. But in this world the language of punishment is more understandable than the spirit of conciliation.”

Disclosing about his genesis he mentioned, “My mother was blessed on Mandarachal by *viswakarma* (the celestial architect, विश्वकर्मा ), and he assured her that she will get a son of his capability. Thus I am a child of *viswakarma* produced from his mental resolve. Reminded by sea, I could recollect my skill. Unless asked for, I was not able to speak out on my own about my skill. Let us begin the bridge work today itself.”

On command of Ram, the monkeys collected huge rock masses and large timber logs of *sal*, *aswkarn*, *dhav*, bamboo, *kutaj*, *arjun*, *tal*, *tilak*, *tinish*, *bel*, *chitvan*, *kaner*, mango, *ashok* from the nearby forest. Using rocks and logs, the bridge construction commenced, and on the first day, 14 *yojan* length was completed (6-22-68). The subsequent lengths completed on the following days were : 2<sup>nd</sup> day 20 *yojan*, 3<sup>rd</sup> day 21 *yojan*, 4<sup>th</sup> day 22 *yojan*, and 5<sup>th</sup> day 23 *yojan*. The south side end of the completed 100 *yojan* bridge was near *suvel* mountain of Lanka. 10 *yojan* wide and 100 *yojan* long bridge became an object of attraction for the celestial beings. Gathering in the sky, they praised the tough and impossible work completed by Nal with the assistance of ten billion monkeys (6-22-78). The appearance of the bridge was like a shadow bridge (स्वातीपथ / छायापथ ) (6-22-74) over the sea.

With a view to protect the bridge against the possible danger of the demons, Vibhishan, holding mace in his hand, stood guard on the Lanka end itself. On the initiative of Sugriv, Ram climbed the shoulder of Hanuman, and Lakshaman climbed over the shoulder of Angad. Lead by Ram and Lakshaman, the monkeys’ army moved with a great uproar subduing the sound of tides of the sea. Some of the monkeys swam along the bridge, while others flew over it, and gradually enjoying the trekking, they arrived at the southern sea shore. Finding abundance of water, fruits and roots Sugriv preferred to pitch the camp on sea shore itself.

Seeing miraculous deed of bridging the sea, gods along with *charan* चारण, *siddh* सिद्ध and sages gathered near Ram. They offered their respectful worship to Ram with sea water.

Greeting him with recitation of his glory, they wished his victory over the enemy as well as sought his continued compassion over the people of earth for their prosperity.

### 6-23 Bad omens over Lanka (16 / 815)

Ram noticed several bad omens which were indicative of loss of lives of demons and monkeys. They suggested large scale carnage and destruction. He enumerated them, "Wind is laden with dust, mountains keep on shaking, and trees are falling. Black clouds pour blood mixed drops. The evening has red reflections, and torch of fires drop from sun. Moon has reduced light and has got mix of black and red rays indicative of impending cataclysm of the world. Sun has blue spots as well as red and short circles around it. The sky is full of crows, vultures and hawks. We need to make preparations for safety of our army by putting them in several contingents at different places where adequate water and fruits are available . He also advised to attack over Lanka at the earliest."

### 6-24 Sugirva's preparations and Shuk reporting to Ravan (44 / 859)

Sugriv arranged the stay of the monkeys in a well defined framework. He was seen as if a full autumn moon shone amidst brilliant stars. The monkeys' multitude was oceanic in appearance, and earth seemed to quake with their gathering. Hearing the sound of musical instruments in Lanka, monkeys also produced counter sound as uproarious as far spread thunder of the clouds.

When Ram had a look at Lanka, he was seized with sorrow of Sita who was detained inside the city. He felt as if *rohini*<sup>14</sup> was afflicted by mars. City of Lanka was marvelous creation of *viswakarma*. The white seven storied mansions draw a distinct line in the sky which was earlier occupied by the colossal lotus feet<sup>15</sup> of lord Vishnu (6-24-10). The cool breeze coming from the city has fragrance of flowers. We hear the chirping of birds in the green groves evenly spread over the landmass. These groves are comparable to *chaitrarath* of kuber's garden.

Ram inspected the strategic formation of the army which was given the shape of human body (6-24-14). Nal and Angad occupied the place of heart. Rishabh occupied the right arm, and Gandhamadan was on the left arm. Ram and Lakshman themselves were in the location of head, whereas Jambvan, Sushen, and Vegdarshi occupied the abdomen. Sugriv himself protected the back side.

When the formations took shape, the demons messenger<sup>16</sup> Shuk who was arrested by the monkeys was released (6-24-23). Scared to his core, Shuk arrived to the demon's

<sup>14</sup> In *valmiki ramayan* examples of moon with star of *rohini*, *chitra* and affliction with mars are noteworthy. This suggests that there exists correlation of happenings over earth with the position of stars and planets in sky.

<sup>15</sup> Another noteworthy favorite example is of *trivikram bhagwan* which is often found repeated in *valmiki ramayan*.

<sup>16</sup> Shuk was arrested on the northern sea shore, and he was under arrest until strategic shifting of the monkeys' army was completed from northern to the southern sea shore.



king, Ravan. Seeing him Ravan enquired, “Your two wings appear as if they have been clipped. Have they been torn away by the monkeys?”

Shuk informed, “I was trapped by the angry monkeys who didn’t hear your message, and they tore my wings away. Crossing the brackish vast sea, the killer of *Viradh*, *Khar* and *Kabandha* has arrived at our threshold with his huge monkey army. Now it seems we are left with two options. Either return Sita or fight face to face with him.”

Reacting to Shuk’s advice Ravan mentioned, “I will show the ascetics my skill of archery. My bow is a vina (guitar) for me. The arrows produce the musical notes out of it. The resonating string generates the waves of musical rhythm, and the cry of dying warriors is the accompanying vocal song. The sound of arrows leaving the string is like rhythmic clapping. The crowd of enemy makes the stage of presentation. When my elder brother Kuber, Indr and Varun can’t face my fiery shafts, I am surprised, how these ascetics will face them!”

### **6-25 Ravan’s spy Shuk and Saran (33 / 892)**

When Ram arrived with the huge monkey army on the southern shore, Ravan sent his two spies to assess the strength of the enemy. He also wanted to know, “what sort of weapons Ram has got in his possession. What is the exact number of monkeys, and who is the chief of army?”

Both the spies, disguised as monkeys moved across the enemy’s camp but were not able to assess the exact number of monkeys. While they felt puzzled, they caught the imagination of Vibhishan. Arresting them, he brought them to Ram and mentioned, “These two spies, Shuk and Saran are sent by Ravan to study and report to him our strength and weaknesses.”

Ram spoke to them, “If you have visited our side to your satisfaction, you are free to go back to your master. If you are still half way you are free to roam around here and collect the information you wish to report to your master. Both of you don’t possess any weapons therefore we will not harm you at all.”

When they were about to leave, Ram asked them to convey to Ravan, “You must now demonstrate your strength to us. We are here to liberate Sita and tomorrow morning we will lay a siege around Lanka.”

Two spies, wishing loudly ‘victory to Ram, and let he live long’ came back to Ravan and spoke to him, “Our presence was detected by Vibhishan, but Ram freed us without causing any harm. Besides other valiant monkeys and bears, Ram, Lakshaman, Sugriv and Vibhishan are the back bone of the army. Four of them are invincible, and let alone the other three, Ram himself is confident of defeating us. The warrior monkeys are excited to begin the battle and we think that you won’t be benefited by running into combat with them. It would be better if conciliation is attempted, and Sita is returned back.”

### 6-26 Ravan took a look at army chiefs of monkeys (47 / 939)

Hearing the spies report, Ravan mentioned to them, "If gods, *gandharv* and demons together come to fight, I will never return Sita. It seems, being greatly teased by monkeys, you are scared of them, and advise me to return Sita. I don't care about my enemies, since I had always been invincible in the battle field."

Getting angry over them, he took them to the topmost terrace of the mansions to have a clear view of the army of monkeys. When he took a look at them, he found the entire space from sea shore to Lanka including all forests and mountains, occupied by monkeys. He enquired from Saran, "Introduce me who are chiefs of the different contingents, and who is the chief of chiefs."

Saran mentioned, "(i) Surrounded by one hundred thousand monkeys, is Neel, and he leads the army. (ii) The other one, who frequently bangs his tail over ground, and is creating terrifying sound, is Angad; he is son of Vali, and is prince of Kishkindha. It is he, whose brain worked<sup>17</sup> for securing Hanuman's success in his mission in locating Sita (6-26-19). (iii) Standing behind Angad is Nal who built the bridge. He is master of eight hundred thousand plus hundred million hundred i.e., a slightly over ten billion of mighty monkeys. (iv) The silver white complexioned is Shwet who keeps on cheering up the monkeys. (v) There is a mountain range called Sanrochan, near Gomati river. Kumud belongs to that region and is accompanied by the monkeys from there. (vi) The one having red, yellow, and grey hair over his body is Chanda and has capacity to lead millions of monkeys. (vii) The monkey who has got long hair over his neck and is of yellowish brown complexion, is Rambh, and he keeps roaming in the forest of *vindhya*, *krishngiri*, *sahya* and *sudarshan*. He is looking to Lanka as if he would burn the city and has over millions of monkeys with him. (viii) The monkey who is time and again yawning and expanding his ears is Sharabh. He is from Salveya mountain, and although he leads one hundred forty thousand monkeys called vihar<sup>18</sup>, he is excited to fight alone. (ix) One who looks like dark cloud and is surrounded by fifty hundred thousand monkeys is Panas and he hails from Pariyatr mountain. (x) One who has come from Durdar mountain, and drinks water of Vena river, is Vinat. He has sixty hundred thousand monkeys with him who are called Krodhan and keeps defying you for combat. (xi) Having red complexion, looking like *meru* mountain is Gavay, and he is served by seventy hundred thousand monkeys.

### 6-27 Saran continued introducing monkey chiefs (48 / 987)

(xii) This monkey who has long multicolor and shining hair over his tail is Har. His thousands of followers are holding trees to smash Lanka. (xiii) The mighty bear is Dhumr, who stays at *rikshvan* mountain and drinks water of Narmada river. He is

<sup>17</sup> एतस्य सा मतिः सर्वा यद् दृष्ट्वा जनकात्मजा । हनूमता वेगवता राघवस्य हितैषणा ।। 6-26-19

<sup>18</sup> This is indicative of monkeys coming from Bihar (present state of India).

surrounded by dark bears from all regions. (xiv) Younger brother of Dhumr is Jambvan whose valor is superior to the former. He is learnt to have helped Indr during battle of gods and demons. He is well composed and always honours his elders and ministers. (xv) One who often leaps up and stands erect is Dambh and has got a large contingent of monkeys. He is devotee of thousand-eyed Indr and has augmented several times Indr with his monkey army. (xvi) The other monkey is Samanadan and is capable of touching mountains located at a distance of one *yojan* from his place. He is said to be the grandfather of monkeys. He had once challenged Indr for combat, and had emerged victorious. (xvii) In order to help gods against demons, fire god gave birth to the monkey called Krathan from a *gandharv* mother. He regularly attends Kuber, and stays on the same mountain over which your brother Kuber stays enjoying the shade of the rose-berry *जामुन* tree. Krathan never praises himself from his own mouth. (xviii) Look at the place where the cloud of dust. There stands Pramathi famous for his prevalence over elephants. He roams around river *ganga*, and stays over Ushirbeej mountain. He also frequently moves on *mandrachal*. (xix) The black faced long tailed monkey is Gavaksh and is supported by his over ten millions monkeys of the same origin. (xx) The other radiant monkey is Kesari who stays at Meru circumscribed daily by sun. The trees over Meru is said to bear fruits in all seasons. This mountain is known for its special type of honey. (xxi) Savarnimeru is the gem of sixty thousand golden mountains as you are gem of the demons. The monkeys staying over this mountain are lead by Shatabali who is a devotee of sun god. The monkeys with him have grey, copper red, yellow and white faces. (xxii) There are innumerable mighty and tall monkeys from Vindhya who are here to engage you in combat.

## 6-28 Further introduction by Shuk (42 / 1029)

On completion of introduction about monkeys by Saran, further introduction was picked by Shuk. He mentioned, "(i) The monkeys tall like *sal* trees of the Himalayas are over two hundred million in number. They stay in Kishkindha and are secretary to Sugriv. They are capable of transforming to the guise of their wishes. (ii) Two monkeys having physique like gods are Dwvid and Maind. By the grace of Brahma, they had been benefited with the draught of nectar. (iii) The monkey standing alone like an elephant is Hanuman who had earlier visited Lanka and met Sita. He is elder son of Kesari and is capable of stirring the sea alone. He can disguise himself in any form, and moves as fast as the mighty wind. Once, when he was a child, leapt over three thousand *yojan* in the sky towards sun. He wanted to grab the sun whom he mistook as a delicious fruit. Since he couldn't reach sun, he fell over *Udaigiri* mountain and as a result his chin was twisted. I have collected legends about him from reliable sources. His potential is unfathomable, and he enflamed the fire god to burn Lanka to ashes, who had been earlier subservient to you. (iv) By the side of Hnauman, is lotus eyed Ram who has bluish in complexion. He is a righteous person, knows *veda*, has got possession of *brhamastr*, and is expert in archery and warfare. His shafts can pierce through sky, and split through earth. His anger is like death, and valour is that of Indr. He is ready for a combat with you whose wife Sita you had abducted from Janasthan. (v) On his right is Lakshaman, his brother. He is of shining complexion and has got black curly hair. He is hall mark in class of

warriors. He is endowed with invincible valour. He is soul of Ram and remains on his right. (vi) On the left of Ram is Vibhishan who had already been anointed king of Lanka by Ram. (vii) The brilliant mountain standing out among monkeys is king Sugriv. His headquarter is cave fort of Kishkindha. Due to rugged mountains entry to Kishkindha is tough. The golden garland made of hundred *lakshmi*, around his neck is a gift of Ram to him after killing Vali. Ram's other gifts to him are Tara, and kingdom of Kishkindha."

Shuk explained further the unit of count.

- 1 koti = 100 lakhs
- 1 shanku (or Neel) = 100, 000 koti
- 1 mahashanku = 100, 000 shanku
- 1 vrind = 100, 000 mahashanku
- 1 mahavrind = 100, 000 vrind
- 1 padm = 100, 000 mahavrind
- 1 mahapadm = 100, 000 padm
- 1 kharv = 100, 000 mahapadm
- 1 mahakharv = 100, 000 kharv
- 1 samudr = 1000 mahakharv
- 1 ogh = 100, 000 samudr
- 1 mahogh = 100, 000 ogh

Vibhishan and Sugriv challenge you with army having strength of thousand koti, thousand mahashanku, hundred vrind, thousand mahavrind, hundred padm, thousand mahapadm, hundred kharv, hundred samudr, hundred mahogh, and sumudra like koti mahogh.

Shuk further pointed out, "O, King! The army of monkeys is like brilliant planets. You need to make such a preparation that you are not humiliated by them."

### **6-29 Ravan rebuked Shuk and Saran (29 / 1058)**

Having a glance of the entire army and introduction about the important ones, Ravan spoke to his spies, "The king is capable of mercy as well as punishment. Those who work for the king and their source of earning is from the king, should never speak unsolicited things to the king. Is it proper that both of you sang the glory of the enemy who is now on the threshold of Lanka. Both of you have failed to maintain the decorum of royal court. Fools! Having advisers like if I have saved this state, this is my credit.

Recalling your past obligations I spare your life. Both of you, get out of my kingdom, and never show your face to me. They left paying due respect to him.

Subsequently, Ravan spoke to Mahodara, for calling the trustworthy royal spies. Soon the spies appeared with folded hands before Ravan. He asked them, "Go and collect the relevant information from the enemy's camp. How they sleep, what they eat, and what is their immediate action plan?" Lead by Shardul, a group of spies came to the *Suvel* mountain camp of Ram, Lakshaman, Sugriv and Vibhishan. Being detected by Vibhishan, they were arrested, and were severely tortured by the monkeys. When compassionate Ram helped their release, they rushed back to Ravan.

### 6-30 Shardul's information to Ravan (35 / 1093)

Coming to Ravan, Shardul informed that the enemy is camping near *suvel* mountain. When Ravan saw his pale face, he wanted to know whether he was captured and tortured by them. Shardul confirmed, "It is difficult to get into their camp. It is heavily protected from all sides. The layout of the army is on the pattern of *garud*. When I entered their camp, the demons of Vibhishan detected my presence. I was detained by them, and monkeys began thrashing me. At the same time, I was taken around inside the camp mentioning my fault of entering the camp stealthily. Suddenly, Ram interfered and he saved my life. Bridging sea with rocks they have arrived here. When I was released, they had marched towards the fort to lay siege, and attack over the city. Before they come over us, either you return Sita to them, or face them in the battle field."

Pondering over Shardul's statement, Ravan spoke to him, "I would never return Sita even if all the gods and demons come fighting to me." Saying this he enquired more information about the chiefs among the monkeys. Shardul continued with the desired information, "I will tell you one by one. The son of Riksharaja (Sugriv) is invincible in combat. Jambvan is a mighty bear, and he is son of Gadgad. There is one more son of Gadgad, and that is Dhumr. There is a monkey called Kesari, and he is son of Brihaspati, preceptor of Indr. Hanuman, son of Kesari had been to Lanka who caused immense damage to the city. He is mental son of vayu also. Sushen is son of Dharm, and Dadhimukh is son of Chandrama. Sumukh, Durmukh, and Vegdarshi are children of Mrityu. They are really manifestation of death. Neel is son of Agni. Angad is grandson of Indr. Dwid and Maind are sons of Ashwini kumar. Gaj, Gavaksh, Gavay, Sharabh, and Gandhmadan are five sons of Yamraj. Shwet and Jyotirmukh are mental sons of Surya. The son of Varun is known as Hemkut. Nal is son of Viswakarma, and Vasu's son is Durdhar. The monkeys having hereditary relation with gods are one hundred million in number. There are other countless monkeys also, and it is impossible to describe about them.

Shardul mentioned specially about Ram and Lakshaman, "Ram is full of righteousness and is a mighty and formidable young warrior. It was he who killed Khar, Dushan, Trishira, Viradh and Kabandh. His potential is infinite and it is difficult to describe them in detail. His younger brother, Lakshaman looks like king of elephants, and even Indr may not be able to face his shafts in the battlefield."

**6-31 Sita in dilemma (45 / 1138)**

Having heard about the details of the enemy from the spies, Ravan was gripped with anxiety. He immediately called the meeting of his close associates and after discussing with them about the future action plan left for his palace. Subsequently, he called Vidyuyjihva, a demon known for show of sorcery. He asked him to produce by sorcery cut head of Ram, and his bow and arrows. As desired by Ravan, the demon Vidyuyjihva produced what he wanted. Impressed by his presentation, Ravan left with him for *pramadavan* to see Sita. Sita was sitting under a ashok tree, deeply immersed in the memory of Ram. Her eyes had a downward gaze. When Ravan arrived near her, reciting his name he spoke to her, "Ram had camped here on sea shore. Demons army lead by Prahast attacked over them while they were sleeping. Hanuman, Angad, Sugriv, and others were killed, and Ram was also beheaded by a sword. Vibhishan has been arrested while Lakshaman had run away with a few monkeys. Sita, You have lost your base now, and you have no option left except to accept me."

Ravan, then sent for Vidyuyjihva to show Sita the head of Ram so that she can have the last glimpse of him. On the behest of Ravan, Vidyuyjihva presented the head of Ram made through sorcery. Ravan introduced her with the bow and arrow of Ram which Vidyuyjihva had also prepared. Having done that Ravan asked Sita, "Now accept me."

**6-32 Wailing Sita (44 / 1182)**

When Sita had a look of the head of Ram, she believed it to be the true one, and began weeping bitterly. She cursed Kaikeyi for the tragic end of her husband. She fell trembling unconscious over the ground. When her fit was over, she again had a look over the head and cried, "You have attained the status of a mighty warrior, but I am a widow now. You were knowledgeable in the statecraft, and how you have been deceived by the demons. Like a chaste woman you are now lying over the ground. I have been worshipping your bow with flowers and sandal and today it is lying before me unattended. Since marriage we stayed together for a long period, and today you have left leaving this ill fated to demons' disposal. Three of us came to forest together, and now Lakshaman would go back alone to inform Kausalya. Hearing the heart rending news, how she will keep her life. After crossing the vast sea you emerged victorious, but your death while sleeping is like drowning in the ditch of the size of a cow hoof. "

While Sita was crying for her ill fate, a messenger came to inform Ravan about an emergency call from army chief Prahast. When Ravan left to attend the meeting, both the items of the magic show disappeared. Ravan was engaged in making necessary arrangements for the ensuing battle. He advised to announce in the city asking the warriors to assemble immediately at the designated place.

**6-33 Sita consoled (38 / 1220)**

Sarama was a noble demoness. She came to console Sita who was grieved on a false news. She mentioned, "I am a guard deputed by Ravan, but I love you like my

affectionate friend. I have heard everything what Ravan had told you. When he left I followed him and have come back with firm news that war is imminent with Ram. Ram is safely camping on the southern sea shore. Whatever he showed you were product of sorcery. You discard the scene which you carry in your mind. Get up, get rid of the grief, alas! How you have soiled your body in dust grieving for Ram. You are lucky, goddess Lakshami would be soon at your service. I am sure very soon, Ram will himself unlock the single mat of your hair.”

While she was consoling Sita, she heard the trumpet of declaration of war. She drew Sita's attention to it and convinced her that she had truly reported the precise status of the developments taking place, “When Ram crossed the vast sea, the demon king has lost the balance, and now he can't avoid the impending war. You must have noticed how agitated he left this place.”

She reported to Sita, “This trumpet has caused urgent preparation of chariots, cavalry and infantry for the war. You can see how they the demons army have began streaming towards the strategic locations.”

#### 6-34 Sarma posted Sita with truth (28 / 1248)

Sarma further tried to win her confidence and mentioned, “If you prefer, I would fly in disguise to Ram and convey your well being to him.” Sita, welcome her proposal and praised her capability, but she requested her not to do that. She sought her assistance in collecting information about what Ravan was thinking and doing at that time.

Hearing Sita's request, Sarma went out to collect the latest news about Ravan. She went to the Ravan's palace and came back with the present status. On her return, she could realize that Sita was direct incarnation of goddess *Lakshami* who was sitting without lotus in her hands (6-34-16, सा प्रविष्टा ततस्तत्र ददर्श जनकालजाम् । प्रतीक्षमाणं स्वामेव भ्रष्टपद्ममिव श्रियम् ।। ) When she came near Sita, she embraced her, and gave a seat close to herself. Thereafter, she enquired in sweet words about the updates. Sarma narrated what she had learnt, “Ravan's mother, and an elder minister had tried to reason round him to return Sita immediately with utmost honor. They pleaded that Ram's divinity is confirmed from the happenings of Janasthan when he alone eliminated the demons from there. Later, arrival of Hanuman who met Sita, killed several demons, burnt Lanka, and left unhurt, further confirm that without supreme<sup>19</sup> divinity these incidents were not feasible. These events are sure signals of his divinity. But that demon is destined to die, and therefore he has ignored their advice.”

She pointed out to Sita the uproarious sound of conch coming from the monkeys' camp. Hearing that sound the demons had become afraid of the impending calamity over Lanka.

<sup>19</sup> 6-34-22, लङ्घनं च समुद्रस्य दर्शनं च हनूमतः । वधं च रक्षसां युद्धे कः कुर्यान्मानुषो युधि ।।

### 6-35 Malyavan's attempt to reason with Ravan (37 / 1285)

Ram had made attack over Lanka. The sound of conch and uproars of monkeys had been heart in Lanka as a heart rending sound. Ravan, sitting in the meeting of the war council mentioned sarastically, "I have learnt from you about Ram's bridging the sea, coming over in Lanka, and now I hear the uproarious challenge of combat. There is no doubt that he is a great warrior, and you people are still greater to him in valour that in such a critical juncture you keep watching each other's face."

Malyavan was maternal grandfather of Ravan. He was also in the meeting. He spoke to Ravan, "The wise king always act according to the situation. If he finds the enemy is equal or stronger, he adopts the policy of conciliation. If he finds the enemy weaker then only he makes the attack or counters the attack as the situation may be. I therefore advise to adopt the policy of conciliation with Ram."

Supporting his points further he quoted, "Brahma has created gods and demons. Gods follow the path of righteousness whereas demons take the course of sinful deeds. In satyug the righteousness prevails upon the sinful deeds, where as in kaliyug the reverse is the case. Sages have been continuing their penance and oblations to enhance the potential of righteousness. By their efforts, gods have gathered strength, and the present scene is the manifestation of gods righteousness against your sinful act. Your boon have made you safe against gods, *gandharv* and *yaksha* but not against humans and monkeys. The present attack is clear indication of this."

He continued his persuasion to desist Ravan from combat, and referred to several bad omens which suggest impending calamity over demons: (i) clouds shower warm blood mixed with water over the city, (ii) horses and elephants shed tears, (iii) the quarters and horizon has become hazy with dust, (iv) meat eater animals, vultures, and jackals gather in group in groves, (v) in dream black women show their yellow teeth and stealing away household stuff they laugh with contempt, (vi) the oblation stuff is polluted by dogs, (vii) cows beget asses, and mongooses begets rats, (viii) the unheard co-habitation of tigers with cats, dogs with boars, and *kinnar* with demons and humans have become prevalent, (ix) pigeons with white wings and red claws roam freely in Lanka, (x) the house hold birds (parrot and myna) engage with wild birds and fall defeated over ground, (xi) animals and birds lament loudly raising their moth towards sun, (xii) in dream, death in the form of terrifying black shaven head humans stare over our mansions.

Finally, he advised Ravan, "I am sure Vishnu has incarnated<sup>20</sup> as Ram (6-35-35) who has performed miraculous deeds of bridging the sea. This sort of performance is beyond the imagination of an ordinary human being. It is therefore essential that you should discard enmity with him, and adopt the policy of truce to enable the demons enjoy a safe, happy and longer living."

<sup>20</sup> विष्णुं मन्यामहे रामं मानुषं रूपमास्थितं । नहि मानुषमात्रोऽसौ राघवो दृढविक्रमः ॥ 6-35-35



**6-36 Malyavan condemned (22 / 1307)**

Ravan was extremely angry to hear Malyavan's advice. He mentioned, "I don't see anything special in Ram. Banished by his father, he has made friendship with monkeys and crossed the sea. He is an ordinary human being. Taking the side of the enemy you uttered unpardonable words against the crowned and ruling king of Lanka. Either you have been prompted by the enemy or you are their agents and have shifted your loyalty to them. Soon you will see, this is my promise, that along with all the monkeys I would send Ram to the death world."

Malyavan maintained complete silence, and subsequently wishing him to be victorious left the council for home. Later, Ravan made the security arrangements of the city, and posted selected warriors on various entries of the city: on east Prahasta; on south Mahaparshv, and Mahodar; on west Indrajeet; on north Shuk and saran. He also mentioned that he would himself inspect the northern entry. In central Lanka, Virupaksh was made responsible to maintain complete vigil for safety and security.

**6-37 Ram deputed warriors (37 / 1340)**

Ram met with his select team to ponder over the strategy of victory. Those present in that consultation were Lakshaman, Sugriv, Hanuman, Angad, Vibhishan, Jambvan, Sharabh, Sushen, Maind, Dwvid, Gaj, Gavaksh, Kumud, Nal and Panas. The common impression was that Lanka was impregnable from all sides.

In the meanwhile, Vibhishan informed them, "My four ministers Anal, Panas, Sampati, and Pramati had been in Lanka in the guise of birds. They have come back with the details of strategy adopted by Ravan. Prahsta has been posted on eastern gate, while Mahaparshv and Mahodar had been commanded to safeguard southern gate. On western gate Indrajeet has been deputed. Ravan shall himself be on the northern gate assisted by Shuk, and Saran. Virupaksh has been posted in the central Lanka."

Elaborating on the army strength, Vibhishan mentioned, "There are ten thousand elephants, ten thousand chariots, twenty thousand horses, and over ten million infantry in the demons army." Vibhishan introduced his four ministers to Ram who elaborated what they have themselves observed with their own eyes.

Later, Vibhishan mentioned, "Let us take stock of the real strength of the enemy. The idea is to make matching preparations and not to get panicked or scared from the enemy's strength. When Ravan had attacked over Kuber, he was accompanied by six hundred thousand demons, and each one of them was as strong as Ravan himself. I am sure for Ram nothing is impossible, and he can very comfortably win the demons."

Learning from the ministers of Vibhishan, Ram also announced the counter team against each strategic locations of the demons, "Neel will face Prahsta on the east gate. Angad will tackle the demons on the south gate. On the west gate Hanuman will take care of Indrajeet. On north, with Lakshaman, I shall be present to deal with Ravan. Vibhishan, Jambvan and Sugriv shall attack on the centre of the city."

Ram also announced, "The monkeys shall remain in the original form of a monkey, and they will never disguise themselves in the humans' form. Only seven of us: me, Lakshaman, Vibhishan with his four ministers shall maintain the original human form."

Concluding the consultations, Ram expressed his desire to climb the top of *suvel* mountain to have a better view of Lanka.

#### 6-38 Ram at *suvel* top (20 / 1360)

While climbing the *suvel* mountain, Ram was accompanied by Lakshaman, Sugriv, Hanuman, Angad, Vibhishan, Jambvan, Sharabh, Sushen, Maind, Dwvid, Gaj, Gavaksh, Gavay, Sharabh, Gandhamadan, Kumud, Neel, Panas, Her, Rishabh, Durmukh, Shatval and other fast moving monkeys. On way Ram mentioned, "This *suvel* mountain is rich in varieties of precious metals and gems. From here we will have a better view of Lanka, where the devil Ravan resides. He committed a great sin by stealing away my wife Sita. Due to him only, we will see the end of the other demons of this beautiful city."

While roaming over the *suvel* top they took a close look at Lanka. The gates, and ramparts being protected by demons were distinctly visible. The presence of demons on guard appeared like second rampart around the entire city.

The sun was about to set while they were on top of *suvel*. Subsequent full moon light enhanced the grandeur of visual delight, and they stayed there with a view to spend the night.

#### 6-39 Lanka viewed from *Suvel* (28 / 1388)

At night they took a look at Lanka from the top of *suvel*. Lanka was situated on top of *tirkut* mountain which was impregnable from all considerations. The city had white mansions perched in sky like white clouds. Groves, orchards, and forests enhanced its grandeur. All varieties of fruits bearing trees were full of bees and delicious fruits similar to *nandan van* of *Indr*, and *chaitrarath* of *kuber*. Chirping of birds was the common scene. The fragrance of various kinds of flowers had permeated the entire environment. Ram along with his team was surprised to see the grand setting as well as natural resources of Lanka. A few monkeys sought the permission of Sugriv to visit Lanka. They entered the city in disguise, and were highly impressed by the richness of the demons of Lanka. The city had a conference hall (*chaitya Prasad* चैत्यप्रासाद ) supported by thousand pillars. It was most charming and considered to the gem of the city of Lanka and was heavily guarded by the demons.

#### 6-40 Sugriv wrestled with Ravan (30 / 1418)

Subsequently, Ram along with others climbed the highest peak of *suvel* which was two *yojan* wide. They had a better view of Lanka situated at *trikoot* top. The city was full of well planned gardens and groves. While gazing around, they came across a view in which Ravan was visualized sitting at a terrace of one *gopur*. He was being fanned by

*chavar*. His dress was red and the jewels were also red. His body had been smeared with red sandal. The dent of *airavat*'s tusk over his chest was distinctly visible.

Looking at Ravan, Sugriv became suddenly excited. He leaped through sky and landed at Ravan's terrace. Looking at him for a few moments he spoke to Ravan, "I am a friend<sup>21</sup> as well as a servant of the master of the universe, Ram. I will not spare your life today."

Saying thus, he jumped over him and snatched his crown. Later Ravan also retaliated by lifting him up bodily and thrashing him down over ground. Sugriv bounced up like ball struck over ground, and he also lifted up Ravan bodily, and thrashed him heavily over ground. Such attack and counter attack continued for some time. Their body had shining flow of sweat and blood from bruises, and they looked more like flowers of *sema* and *palas*. While engaged in fierce wrestling, they together holding each other closely, fell down the terrace deep in the ditch. Lying unconscious for some time, they again resumed the combat. All sorts of tricks using fists, nails, slaps and punches were often being used by both of them.

Subsequently Sugriv realized that Ravan would resort to tricks of magic, and he leapt up in the sky, and landed to Ram among his supporting group of monkeys. He was greeted heartily by the chiefs of monkeys.

#### 6-41 An envoy – Angad (99 / 1517)

Looking at Sugriv's body bruises, Ram embraced him, and spoke, "Being the sovereign king of monkeys you shouldn't have attempted such adventure. I had expected counseling with me, before you take any decision. You can't imagine my anxiety! I was worried about your safety, and had determined that if anything happened to you, after killing Ravan, handing over Lanka to Vibhishan, and Ayodhya to Bharat, I would end my life. I believe, in future you won't undertake such a adventure."

Respecting his anxiety, Sugriv mentioned, "I knew my potential, and when I saw the abductor Ravan, how could I have pardoned him?" Greeting Sugriv's words, Ram spoke to Lakshman, "The creation of several contingents out of this huge army, we would be able derive the maximum benefit. Taking care of availability of sweet water and delicious fruits, let us finalize the formation of strategic contingents and their respective posting."

Ram also pointed towards appearance of bad omens indicative of universal loss of lives: (i) wind has become stormy, (ii) earth quakes, mountains swing, and elephants<sup>22</sup> produce terrifying sound, (iii) clouds shower bloody drops, (iv) the terrible evening turns bloody red, (v) sun drops fire flashes, (vi) meat eater animals wail looking towards sun, (vii) moon has reduced brightness and is encircled by red and black rings, (viii) sun is

<sup>21</sup> लोकनाथस्य रामस्य सखा दासोऽस्मि राक्षस । 6-40-10

<sup>22</sup> Here mention is made to celestial elephants who support the earth and they are called *diggaj* दिग्गज

encircled by small red ring, and has black spots, (ix) stars are hazy, (x) crows, vultures and hawks swing over ground, and jackals wail terribly.

“Although Lanka is impregnable, let us attack at the earliest” ,said Ram, and began coming down *suvel*. Coming to foot hill zone, Ram made a move in auspicious moment (मुहुर्त ) to charge the first attack over Lanka. Lanka was decorated with flags, and festoons hoisting high in the sky. The high ramparts and strong gates were impregnable, but regardless of these constraints, the monkeys’ army made a move to lay siege around the city.

Leading the huge army, Ram with Lakshman arrived at the north gate where Ravan was in command himself. Neel assisted by Maind and Dwvid took control of the east gate. Angad having company of Rishabh, Gavaksh, Gaj, and Gavay occupied the south gate. Pramathi and Praghas with other monkeys followed Hanuman on the west gate. Sugriv accompanied by mighty monkeys took the responsibility to attack over the central Lanka. Sushen and Jambvan with large contingent of warriors stood in reserve on rear guard. All the monkey warriors were equipped with huge rocks and trees. They had been swinging their tail with excitement of combat. The monkeys had laid a siege around Lanka, and their frequent uproars were heart rending for the demons.

In the meanwhile, Ram pondering over standard practices of statecraft, beacons Angad. Discussing with Vibhishan and others, he advised Angad to go flying over the ramparts as an envoy to Ravan and convey him my last message, which might help in bringing him back to reasons. Ram briefed Angad, “Ravan, you have committed grievous sins torturing sages and gods. Deceiving me, you abducted my wife. All your sins have prompted us to come to your threshold. Come out, and fight. Don’t confine yourselves within the ramparts. Pray your deities, and offer last oblations. Your end is imminent. Alternatively, you may surrender and return Sita to me.”

As directed by Ram, Angad leapt across the ramparts, and went inside Ravan’s palace. Standing before Ravan, he repeated the message conveyed by Ram. Hearing him, Ravan became very angry and commanded demons to kill him. Four mighty demons stormed over Angad and got hold of him. Angad taking them together, made a terrible sound, and leapt over the terrace of that building. While Angad had reached the terrace, those demons had fallen midway over ground. Roaming freely over the terrace he continued producing terrible sound. With the impact of his footsteps, the roof got damaged with wide cracks. Ravan was upset with the development, and Angad taking a galloping stride arrived back to Ram.

While monkeys had laid a successful siege of Lanka, the ramparts were fully occupied by them. It appeared as if the ramparts were made of monkeys only. Sushen continued inspecting all the gates, and passed on updates to Ram. Most of the demons had been terribly frightened with the uproarious presence of monkeys around Lanka. Some of the demons were excited about the imminent combat, and awaited passionately the royal command.

### 6-42 Monkeys fought demons (47 / 1564)

When Ravan heard about the siege around the city, he doubled the reinforcements over the gates and himself went to the terrace. He saw to the end of his sight monkeys occupying the space outside the city, and the ramparts as well. Monkeys had also strengthened their positions by occupying the diagonals also, for the cardinal directions were already commanded by the designated chiefs and their contingents. Vibhishan with mace in his hand had taken his position near Ram.

Subsequently, Ravan commanded the demons to attack over the monkeys. Soon, the battle trumpets rented the air. The demons equipped with varieties of weapons came out of the city. Ram asked monkeys to attack, and they stormed in competition to attack over demons (एवमुक्ते तु वचसि रामेणाक्लिष्टकर्मणः । संघर्षमाणाः प्लवगाः सिंहनादैरनादयान् 6-42-9). Sounding glory to Ram, Lakshman and Sugriv the monkeys swooped over demons. The demons also shouted galore the glory to Ravan. Fierce fighting began between the demons and the monkeys. Monkeys were using trees, rocks and their nails while demons used swords, tridents and iron clubs.

### 6-43 Demons suffered humiliation (46 / 1610)

Demons riding horses, chariots and elephants crowded all the quarters outside Lanka. Galore of sound was heard from the movement of chariots. The chaos of fight broke the previously fixed order of the chiefs. Angad was seen engaged with Indrajeet. Pranjangh demon was engaged with Sampati (demon assistant to Vibhishan), and Jambumali was detained by Hanuman. Vibhishan himself fought Shatrughn demon. Gaj fought Tapan and Neel had taken over Nikumbh. Sugriv had his combat with Praghas, while Lakshman fought with Virupaksh. Four demons Agniketu, Rashmikutu, Suptaghn, and Ygyakop were engaged with Ram. Maind fought Vajramushti, and Dwvid engaged Ashaniprabh. Nal fought fiercely with Pratapan. Sushen, son of Dharm successfully detained Vidyumali.

Hair raising fierce fighting took place between monkeys and demons. Indrajeet pounded mace over Angad, who in turn crushed his chariot with the horses.

When Prajangh shot three shafts over sampathi, he used *aswakarn* tree to kill him. Chriot riding Jambumali was eliminated by Hanuman. Nal destroyed both the eyes of Pratapan.

While Praghas caused havoc over monkeys, he was finally killed by Sugriv. Lakshman, torturing Virupaksh with several shafts, finally shot a lethal shaft and he died.

Four demons fighting Ram, had caused bruises over him, but getting angry, he beheaded them by his deadly arrows.

When Maind charged his deadly fist, Vajrmushti crashed over ground with his chariot. Nikumbh had injured Neel who was damp black in complexion, with his arrows, but using the wheel of his chariot, Neel beheaded him as if *Vishnu* had used his disc.

Ashniprabh had caused severe injury to Dwivid using his deadly arrows. Fighting with rocks and hillocks Dwivid had suffered a lot, but finally he used a *sal* tree to crush him and his chariot to dust.

Vidyunmali while riding a chariot had injured Sushen with swift arrows. Finally Sushen used a rock mass to crush his chariot, and the demon jumping down over ground fought with mace. Sushen had to bear a heavy punch of the mace, but using a hillock he smashed the demon's chest, and he dropped dead.

The battle ground was filled with the dead bodies, headless corpses of monkeys and demons. The broken bows, swords, chariots and dead horses created an awful scene.

Although the demons had been heavily humiliated, they awaited the arrival of dusk for renewed attack over the monkeys.

#### 6-44 Ram and Lakshaman in serpent noose (39 / 1649)

The day came to an end, but the fighting didn't stop. Demons made a renewed attack at night. Prevailing upon the constraint of darkness of the night, both parties continued fighting. Demons appeared to have an edge at night, but monkeys also didn't give up. The hand to hand combat caused innumerable loss of lives.

Demons surrounded Ram and showered sharp shafts over him. Soon he cleared the siege, and killed those demons. His lighted arrows provided enough light over the battle ground.

Angad while fighting with Indrajeet had destroyed his chariot. Feeling humiliated, Indrajeet disappeared, and invoked his potential of showering arrows from the invisible state. He was blessed by Brahma for performing such a miraculous feat. He invoked serpent shaft, and Ram and Lakshaman were seen chained by the deadly serpents.

#### 6-45 Monkeys in deep shock (28 / 1677)

Ram directed ten mighty monkeys to locate Indrajeet. Those monkeys were: two sons of Sushen, Neel, Angad, Sharabh, Dwivid, Hanuman, Sanuprasth, Rishabh, and Rishabhskandh. Carrying rocks masses and trees they made a frantic search in sky, but Indrajeet couldn't be located. While monkeys were on search, Indrajeet continued his deadly assault over the enemy army. He shot shafts of all varieties *narach* (नाराच circular tip), *ardhnarach* (अर्द्धनाराच semi-circular tip), *bhall* (भल्ल spear tip), *aanjalik* (आंजलिक palm with fingers tip), *vatsdant* (वत्सदंत calf teeth tip), *sinhdanstr* (सिंहदंत lion teeth tip), and *kshur* (क्षुर knife tip). His deadly shaft shot over Ram and Lakshaman didn't spare any space over their body where blood didn't ooze out. Both brothers looked like a fully blossomed *palas*. The influence of the shafts caused Ram to close his eyes and fell unconscious. Chained by snakes, Lakshaman was highly shocked to see Ram going unconscious. Monkeys were afraid of the developments, and they surrounded both the brothers. They were puzzled, and were not able to decide further action.

### 6-46 Victorious Indrajeet met Ravan (50 / 1727)

Those ten monkeys who were on search of Indrajeet, arrived where Ram and Lakshaman were lying unconscious. They were in deep shock. Vibhishan was surprised to see the development. He used his magical power and saw Indrajeet standing nearby. Indrajeet bursting into derisive laughter mentioned, "The killer of Khar and Dushan is dead now. None of the sages and gods can liberate them from this deadly noose."

Remaining invisible, he also shot deadly shafts to injure the mighty chiefs of the monkey army: nine arrows over Neel, three on each of Dwvid and Maind, single arrow in chest of Jambvan, ten arrows over Hanuman, Gavaksh and Sharabh with two shafts, several arrows over the chief of *langur* Gaj, and Angad.

Grieved by the plight of unconscious brothers, Sugriv wept bitterly. He felt as if he had become an orphan. Vibhishan consoled him and taking water in his hand he wiped the tears from his face. He advised, "It is not a moment for losing the courage. Uncertainty is the special characteristics of a battle ground. If we have balance good luck, they will arise from unconsciousness. Those who are adherents<sup>23</sup> of truth and righteousness never fear of death. Let us now encourage our monkeys who have become nervous with this development. I am sure two brothers are invincible and soon they will regain their consciousness. At this time we have to ensure their full protection." Vibhishan then moved towards the panicked monkeys with a view to encourage them.

Indrajeet was extremely excited with his success, and he described about his performance to the other demons. The demons celebrated the victory of Indrajeet. Together they went back to Lanka. Indrajeet conveyed the happy news to Ravan declaring the end of Ram and Lakshaman. Ravan was proud of his son, and embracing him closely, he extended warm greetings to him. As desired by Ravan, Indrajeet described in detail how he had brought end of Ram and Lakshaman.

### 6-47 Sita in *pushpak viman* brought to Ram and Lakshaman (24 / 1751)

Selected monkeys Hanuman, Angad, Neel, Sushen, Kumud, Nal, Gaj, Gavaksh, Gavay, Sharabh, Gandhamadan, Jambvan, Rishabh, Skandh, Rambh, Shatbali, and Prithu maintained strict vigil around Ram and Lakshaman. They held heavy trees in their hands, and with the slightest shaking of grass they were scared of arrival of the demons.

Ravan, seeing off his valorous son Indrajeet, sent for the demonesses on guard to Sita. On arrival of Trijata<sup>24</sup> with demonesses, Ravan spoke to them, "Tell Sita that Ram and Lakshaman had been killed by Indrajeet. Take her in *pushpak viman* and show the

<sup>23</sup> सत्यधर्माभिरक्तानां नास्ति मृत्युकृतं भयम् 6-46-33

<sup>24</sup> *Trijata* ( त्रिजटा ) has for the first time appeared here in *valmiki ramayan* (this sarg 47 of *yuddha kand*). Earlier demonesses named *kala* ( कला 5-37-11 *sundar kand sarg 37 shlok - 11*) elder daughter of Vibhishan, and *sarama* ( सरमा 6-33-1 *yuddh kand sarg 33 shlok -1*) have been found showing sympathy to Sita.

condition of those two brothers. She will have to now come to me as her husband is dead. She has lost her base, and try to bring her round to accept me.”

Subsequently, Ravan made an announcement in the city that Ram and Lakshaman had been killed by Indrajeet.

As commanded by Ravan, the demonesses took the *pushpak viman* to *ashok vatika*. On their behest, shocked Sita, hearing the news of two brothers, boarded *pushpak viman*. As desired by Ravan, the *viman* flew over entire Lanka showing her the grandeur of the city decorated with flags and festoons. When her *viman* drew close to Ram and Lakshaman she found them lying chained in arrows over the ground. They were unconscious. Their bows and arrows were lying scattered there. The quivers from their shoulders had gone loose. Immersed deeply in sorrow of their pitiable plight, she wailed bitterly.

#### 6-48 Trijata consoled Sita (37 / 1788)

Sita lamented loudly, “The astrologers had predicted about my long married life as well children to me. Ram was predicted to preside over several *ygya* as monarch of Ayodhya. Belying all predictions, today he has clung to the ground. It is said the sign of lotus on feet and hand bring auspiciousness. Soft, uniform and black hair, separated eye brows, hairless and round shining leg below the knee, and close teeth are considered auspicious for a woman. When I move ten fingers and soles of my feet find full contact with ground. My hands and feet are shining and charming. The sign of full barely exists over them. My fingers of hand when brought together don’t leave any gap, and they contact each other fully. My breasts are fleshy and touch each other. The nipples are inward. The navel is deep within the raised adjoining portion. The presence of such signs with me has failed to fetch my well being. He alone killed multitude of demons in Janasthan, crossed the vast sea safely, but he has been drowned in the ditch of a cow hoof. They had all divine weapons in their possession; why didn’t they use them. I am more concerned about my mother-in-law who had been awaiting his return. How ill fated I am!”

Trijata consoled her by describing various noticeable auspicious signs. She mentioned, “I am highly impressed by your adherence to chastity and moral conduct. I advise you to discard your grief about death of two brothers. They can’t be dead. First and foremost striking feature is the presence of charm on their faces. They are lying with divine smile and freshness. A dying person could never demonstrate<sup>25</sup> such sign. Second, If you were a widow, *pushpak* wouldn’t have accepted you on board. They are invincible<sup>26</sup> by any of the gods and demons. How can death ever visit them?”

<sup>25</sup> प्रायेण गतसत्त्वानां पुरुषाणां गतायुषाम् । दृश्यमानेषु वक्त्रेषु परं भवति वैकृतम् ।। 6-48-32

<sup>26</sup> नेमौ शक्यौ रणे जेतुं सेन्द्रैरपि सुरासुरैः । तादृशं दर्शनं दृष्ट्वा मया चोदीरितं तव ।। 6-48-30



Hearing Trijata, Sita spoke to her, “Sister, let it be so.” Sita’s pushpak viaman was soon brought back in Lanka, and she was placed in *ashok vatika* again.

#### 6-49 Ram back to consciousness (33 / 1821)

When monkeys were on guard to the unconscious brothers, they found Ram coming back to consciousness. Ram saw Lakshaman lying unconscious in pool of blood chained by the serpent arrows. He began lamenting loudly, “How unlucky I am that I see my younger brother lying on ground. What shall I gain by getting Sita, if I lose Lakshaman? I can another Sita, but getting brother like Lakshaman is impossible. What reply shall I give to mother Kaikeyi, Kausalya and Sumitra. How shall I face my other two brothers Bharat and Shatrughn? Lakshaman had the skill of shooting five hundred shafts at a time, surpassing the skill of legendry archer *kartvirya arjun*. What did he not use that skill and lying in such a state. I am ashamed of my failing words that I couldn’t anoint Vibhishan as king of Lanka. O Sugriv, Angad, Dwvid, Maind, Jambvan, Gavay, Gavaks, Gaj, Nal, Neel, and other valorous warriors! I am highly satisfied by your loyalty and friendship. I advise you to immediately go back crossing the sea. When I am no more Ravan will see you with contempt.”

In the meanwhile, Vibhishan, black in complexion, had come back to Ram, after assuring the monkeys about the situation and providing them safe place. The rest of the monkeys, who were near Ram, mistook Vibhishan as Indrajeet, and became panicked.

#### 6-50 Ram and Lakhaman freed of serpent chains (65 / 1886)

Sugriv saw panicked monkeys running here and there. He wanted to know from Angad the reason for the panic among monkeys. In the meanwhile Vibhishan arrived, and Suriv could easily make out that reason for panic among the monkeys was the mistaken form of Vibhishan as Indrajeet. Those monkeys were afraid that Indrajeet had arrived again. Sugriva advised Jambvan who was standing on his side to go and pacify the monkeys. Jambvan immediately restored normalcy among the monkeys.

When Vibhishan saw Ram and Lakshaman lying in pool of blood, he was gripped by the grief and he lamented loudly, “Now there is no hope of my becoming the king of Lanka. The treacherous son of Ravan has proved him right that he won’t return Sita.” He wiped with water the eyes of Ram and Lakshaman, and continued wailing. Sugriv consoled him, “You are sure to become the king of Lanka. They will soon rise free of the deadly chain.”

Subsequently, Sugriv spoke to his father-in-law, Sushen, “When they gain consciousness you taking them over your shoulder carry to Kishkindha. I alone would settle with Ravan, and retrieving Sita would soon come back.”

Sushen mentioned, “I have witnessed the battle between gods and demons. When gods lied unconscious in the battle field, preceptor Bruhaspati, revived them using his *mantr* मंत्र and divine herbs. There are two mountains called *Chandr* (चन्द्र), and *Dron* (द्रोण) on

the coast of *ksheer sagar* (क्षीर सागर milky ocean). They were installed by gods themselves during the stirring mission (अमृत मंथन या समुद्र मंथन) of the ocean for nectar. These mountains possess two divine herbs: *sanjivkarani* (संजीवकरणी), and *vishalyakrni* (विशल्य करणी) produced by Brahma himself. Sampathi and other monkeys know those herbs. He can go with Panas and bring that medicine. Hanuman should also go to help bring those divine herbs.”

While the issue of procuring herbs was being discussed, there was a visible disturbance all around. Trees were swinging as if storm had appeared. Sky was overcast and lightning flashes were seen. Broken branches floated in sea. The scared creatures and serpents ran for life. Soon the bright object landed close to Ram. He was *garud*, son of *vinita*.

Noticing the arrival of *garud*, the serpents disguised as arrows ran away. *Garud* washed the faces of Ram and Lakshaman and with his physical contact, two brothers woke up fresh and bright. There were no signs of any injury over their body. *Garud* embraced two brothers to his chest. Seeing that Ram spoke to him, “I am highly obliged to you for your greatness of liberating us from the deadly bond of the demon. I see you fully dressed in divine cloths, jewels and flower garland around your neck. You have a charming personality. Who are you?”

*Garud*’s eyes were full of tears of affection, and he spoke, “I am your friend<sup>27</sup>, and your own soul wandering outside. I learnt from the gods that you have been chained by the deadly serpents. They were sons of *kadru*, very deadly serpents, and no one can survive their attack. They have been transformed into arrows by power of sorcery of the demon. Ram, you will emerge victorious, and shall soon get back with Sita. Now I seek your permission to leave the place. You should not keep in your mind what I mentioned about

my friendship<sup>28</sup> with you. On the conclusion of this mission of Lanka, you will reward me for my service.”

Circumambulating Ram, and embracing him again, *garud* disappeared with wind speed in sky. Monkeys celebrated the occasion by uproarious sound and trumpeting of conch to express their happiness. The monkeys swinging their tails, rushed to Lanka with trees and rocks in their hands. All the quarters were rented with their uproars.

### 6-51 Dejected Ravan dispatched Dhumraksh (36 / 1922)

When Ravan heard the glorious uproar of monkeys he became anxious to know the cause behind their happiness. He asked the demons to find out the cause of their uproar. Demons climbing the roof top saw Ram and Lakshaman in readiness to face the demons. With pale face they came down and informed Ravan about the survival of the

<sup>27</sup> अहं सखा ते काकुत्थ प्रियः प्राणो वहिःश्वरः । 6-50-46

<sup>28</sup> न च कौतुहलं कार्यं सखित्वं प्रति राघव । कृतकर्मा रणे वीर सखित्वं प्रतिवेत्स्यसि । । 6-50-57

two brothers. It was a shock for him, and he heaved deep sighs like a deadly snake. He commanded, Dhmraksh to face the monkeys.

On his command, that dreadful demon made immediate gathering of the army and riding a chariot pulled by asses moved to the battle field. The asses of his chariot had faces of various animals, i.e., lion, and wolf etc. The demons army moved with spears, tridents, clubs, swords, pestles etc. Their weapons had rings attached to them which produced ringing sound with their slightest movement.

Accompanied by a huge army, Dhmraksh emerged at the western gate where Hanuman was in command. Bad omens afflicted the demon's chariot. Vulture and hawks fell fighting over the flag mast. One white trunk of a body wet with blood, producing terrifying sound fell near him. The stormy wind blew with deafening noise, making the surrounding hazy and gloomy.

#### **6-52 Hanuman killed Dhumraksh (38 / 1960)**

Terrible combat took place. Monkeys used trees and rocks while demons shot arrows. In duel within close range, fist, and nail of monkeys were enough to counter their clubs and tridents. Dhumraksh proved deadly by arrows and killed scores of monkeys. Hanuman attacked over him with a heavy hillock. Afraid of the attack, the demon quit his chariot which was soon crushed to ground. Taking mace in his hand he was fighting Hanuman. Although he banged the mace over his forehead, Hanuman hurled a rock mass over him which crushed his bones to dust, and he was no more. Other demons who were with Dhumraksh ran away when they saw his end.

#### **6-53 Vajradanshtr in command (32 / 1992)**

Having come to know the end of dreadful Dhumraksh, Ravan deputed Vajradanshtr who was known for his sorcery. Riding a chariot, and accompanied by army mounted on asses, horses, elephants and camels he left for the battle field. Coming out of the south gate, he was face to face with Angad. Soon bad omens afflicted the surroundings of the demons. The meteors dropped from the clear sky. The jackals produced fire flashes from their mouth. Other animals created terrible noise. The soldiers fell down without any obvious reason. Vajradanshtr ignored the bodings and moved with his army. Soon the demons and monkeys were engaged in close fighting. At the one hand, the demon was deadly with his arrows over monkeys, on the other, Angad spared no chance to kill the demons.

#### **6-54 Vajradanshtr killed (37 / 2029)**

Assaults by monkeys proved superior to the assaults made by demons. Vajradanshtr was angry with the humiliating status. He commenced swift shooting of shafts over monkeys. Angad was also trapped in his whirlpool attack. Angad tried to contain his move by hurling heavy logs of trees but they were cut to pieces by his sharp arrows. When Angad hurled a massive rock, the demon quit his chariot which was soon crushed to dust. Taking mace the demon fought with him. The pounds of Angad made the demon

unconscious, and after a while he again picked up the fight. They were engaged as if mars and mercury<sup>29</sup> were in combat (6-54-28).

(Note: Valmiki is full of such quotations depicting the inherent nature of stars useful for astrological studies).

Angad took up a sharp sword (could be from the battlefield lying in the vicinity) and cut asunder the head of Vajradanshtr. The surviving demons took to their heels, and seeking safety entered the city.

#### 6-55 Akampan on battle ground (32/ 2061)

When Ravan knew about the end of Vajradanshtr, he asked Prahast who was standing before him with folded hands, to send Akampan to the battle ground. Preparations were made and the army moved in advance to the battle ground. Mounted on a huge chariot, Akampan came out sprawled like a dark cloud, producing thunderous noise. He was known for his firmness, and he had rebutted in past, the assaults of gods. When he moved out, suddenly he felt lack of excitement. The horses pulling the chariot had also indicated their poor interest. Ignoring such forebodings, Akampan came forward terrifying the monkeys. His movement was so terrifying that monkeys got scared.

The movement of huge army raised red dust over the battle field. The quarters had become hazy, and the visibility was marred so much so that monkeys were assaulting monkeys, and demons were assaulting demons.

(Note: It is noteworthy that the battle ground was so much soaked with blood, that the dust had become of red colour.)

Massive killing took place, and the battle ground was strewn with trunks and heads. Leading the monkeys Kumud, Nal, Maind and Dwvid caused wanton destruction of the demons army.

#### 6-56 Hanuman killed Akampan (39 / 2100)

Noticing huge and fast loss of the army, Akampan asked the charioteer to take him to those dreadful monkeys. His sharp arrows caused injury to them. Akampan also caused killing of scores of monkey army. Hanuman could notice the demon's notoriety and he rushed over him with rocks. Monkeys were encouraged by the presence of Hanuman. Akampan and Hanuman were engaged in fierce fighting. Whatever rocks was hurled by Hanuman, Akampan could easily counter them. Later, Hanuman tried in vain the heavy logs of *aswakarn* tree. The demon remained undaunted, and he continued showering arrows like Indr's down pour during rainy season. Finally Hanuman was able to kill the demon Akampan with an infallible shot of a tree.

<sup>29</sup> This suggests the prevalence of malefic relation between mars and mercury.

When Akampan was grounded, his army ran away to Lanka. When victorious Hanuman came back to his camp, he was received warmly by Ram, Lakshaman, Vibhishan and Sugriv.

#### **6-57 Prahast on move (44 / 2144)**

After the end of Akampan, Ravan pondered sincerely over the development. He went on inspection of the contingents posted on strategic locations. While observing the city from various places during his inspection, he found laying of complete siege of Lanka by monkeys. He spoke to Prahast, "The situation have come to such a pass that either Kumbhakarn, or Indrajeet, or Nikumbh or you can steer it through to a safe condition."

Prahast readily accepted the challenge, and spoke to Ravan, "Several times the issue was discussed among us. Divergent opinions have lead to this situation. I was of the opinion from the beginning that our wellbeing was in returning Sita to Ram (6-57-14). Otherwise the battle was imminent, and consequently today we have come to such a critical situation. I have been honoured by you, and I am not bothered about my wife, children and my life. You will see how I would sacrifice my life for your wellbeing."

Assuring thus Ravan, Prahast made a move to the battle field. He was accompanied by scores of chiefs and a very large army. Before leaving, the demons offered oblation of ghee to fire god, and its fragrance (6-57-21) permeated around the city. They put flower garlands charged by appropriate *mantr* invoked by Brahmins (6-57-22).

Riding a huge and beautiful chariot, when Prahast moved out of east gate, he was surrounded by his four close aids Narantak, Kumbhhanu, Mahanad and Samunnat. Tumultuous sound produced by movement of his chariot, which terrifying to hear. His chariot was fortified from all sides. Golden screen had enhanced its grandeur, and the flag to the chariot was marked with sign of a snake.

Grandeur of his movement was soon marred by the bad omens. Several times, the charioteer missed the whip which fell down on ground. On plain land, the horses of the chariot had a fall. Jackals produced fires from mouth. Comets fell from sky, and wind had become rough. The planets in sky were engaged in combat causing dim of their brightness. The cloud's thunder was like asses sound, and blood precipitated over the chariot. A vulture facing south perched over the flag.

The moment he landed over the battle ground, he found monkeys in readiness fully equipped with rocks and trees. The uproars of monkeys, and demons trumpets together caused fear among the citizens of the city.

#### **6-58 Neel killed Prahast (61 / 2205)**

Ram was surprised to see the mammoth army surrounding Prahast. He asked Vibhishan, "Who is this valiant warrior ?" Vibhishan introduced him by name of Prahast and mentioned that one third of army's strength was with him.

Soon both sides engaged in fierce fighting. Swords, clubs, trees and rocks countered each other. Four aids to Prahast were killed by eminent monkey warriors: Narantak by Dwvid, Samunnat by Durmukh, Mahanad by Jambvan, Kumbhahanu by Tar.

Prahast was shocked by the loss of his dreadful aids. Overwhelmed by great anger, he showered arrows over the monkeys and continued killing them. Neel noticed the wanton killing of monkeys. He was very angry and he also caused massive end of demons. Prahast observed the loss of demons by Neel and he diverted his chariot to tackle Neel. Coming close to him, Prahast caused grievous injury to Neel. His body was bathed in blood. For some time, Neel tolerated the shower of arrows as if a bull was undaunted by rains. Subsequently, he charged a heavy tree causing loss of horses of Prahast's chariot. Neel was soon able to break his bow also. Having lost his bow, Prahast attacked over Neel holding pestle in his hand. The punch of pestle over the forehead of Neel caused gushing of blood to drench him head to foot. Neel picked up a tree and dashed over his chest, but the demon remained undaunted. Immediately, Neel picked up a huge hillock, and dashed over Prahast. This caused the end of the demon and his head was crushed to hundreds of pieces.

While Ravan was grieved with the news of end of Prahast and pall of gloom was cast over Lanka, Neel was accorded warm greeting by Ram and Lakshaman.

#### **6-59 Ravan humiliated on ground (146 / 2351)**

Ravan was extremely shocked to learn the end of Prahast. He announced, "So far I had taken the enemy as a trifling one, but now I don't want to encourage them further. I would myself take command over the battle ground today."

With the sounding of trumpets, conches, drums, and cymbals Ravan moved out surrounded by select warriors. When Ram saw the huge army coming out of Lanka, he enquired from Vibhishan as to who were there in the army. Vibhishan introduced one by one, "One mounted on elephant is Akampan (other than that killed earlier). One riding the chariot with flag of lion sign, has got teeth like tuskers, and wielded rainbow like bow, is Indrajeet. He is blessed with several boons. One who is large like *vindhyachal*, *astachal*, and *mahendrgiri*, is producing sound from the string of the bow is Atikaya. The other one riding an elephant is continuously producing sound like ringing bells is Mahodar. One riding the horse equipped with spear is Pishach. Holding brilliant trident, and riding a white bull is Trishira. (Note: different from the one killed in Janasthan. This one is son of Ravan). Kumbh is on a chariot carrying *vasuki nag* marked flag. Nikumbh is one who is holding an iron club shining like fire, and is flag of the demons. Narantak (son of Ravan) is riding a brilliant chariot equipped with bow, sword, spear and mace. Ravan is there under an umbrella over a chariot and is surrounded by demons having faces of tiger, camel, elephant, deer, and horse. He is having crown over his head and is as large as several mountains and had been known for humiliating the gods."

Ram was glad to see Ravan and he, assisted by Lakshaman awaited his arrival over the battle ground. Before coming to combat, Ravan wanted proper protection of the city of

Lanka, because he was afraid of monkeys running into the city and causing damage to gardens and mansions. He therefore asked those eminent warriors to stay back in protection of the city.

Ravan, moving forward, made lethal charges of over monkeys. To counter his attack, Sugriv opposed his movement with a huge rock mass in his hand. When he hurled that rock mass over Ravan, he very swiftly cut them into pieces. In turn, he shot a deadly arrow to kill Sugriv. Hit by that arrow Sugriv fell unconscious over ground. Gavaksh, Gavay, Sushen, Rishabh, Jyotirmukh and Nal came forward to safeguard Sugriv. They hurled heavy rocks over Ravan but countering their attack, he quickly caused them to lie over ground. Moving ahead, he created havoc among the monkeys. Some of them ran to Ram for refuge.

When Ram intended to come forward to face him, Lakshaman interfered and sought the permission to deter Ravan. Ram forewarned Lakshaman, "Ravan is a great warrior. Be careful and take advantage of his weak points. Don't allow him to take advantage of your weaknesses." Giving respectful round to Ram, Lakshaman proceeded to restrain Ravan. He was impressed by his long and swift arms, and the mighty bow he was holding.

Hanuman, in the meanwhile, discarding the arrows of Ravan rushed close to him. He defied the demon, "Do you see my mighty right hand raised up? It will soon end your life." Ravan replied, "Let me see your strength first, thereafter I would decide the severity of punishment to you." When Hanuman reminded him about killing of Akshkumar, he became angry and immediately pounded heavily over the chest of Hanuman. This caused giddiness to Hanuman, but getting over it soon, he also slapped Ravan. Ravan was shaken severely as if mountains had swung due to earthquake. Having seen Ravan slapped, the celestial beings shouted cheers to Hanuman. By this time, Ravan composed himself and praised Hanuman, "Hail to you, you are worthy of combat with me." Hanuman mentioned, "I pity on myself, that you are still alive. O, devil! Let me face you once more, then I would dispatch you to the death world." Hearing Hanuman defying thus, Ravan punched a well composed deadly fist over his chest. Hanuman was again destabilized, and realizing his condition, Ravan picked up his fight with Neel. When Hanuman composed himself, he found Ravan engaged with Neel. He didn't interfere and allowed him to fight Neel.

Ravan charged several arrows over Neel. In retaliation, Neel hurled massive rocks and trees over him but he countered them successfully. Subsequently, Neel squeezed himself to a smaller form and perched over the flag of his chariot. Very swiftly he changed his position from flag, to his bow, to his crown. Seeing such a miraculous swiftness of Neel, Ravan was agitated, but Ram, Lakshaman and Hanuman appreciated his valour. Ravan soon charged a deadly fire-shaft over Neel which hit his chest, and he sat on ground taking support of his knees. He was son of fire, so he was able to survive the attack.

Ravan shifted his attention to Lakshaman who had by that time come to him resonating the string of his bow. He challenged the demon king, "Leave the monkeys, and taste my

arrows now.” Ravan warned him, “It is good that you have come. Now I will dispatch you to the death world.” Lakshaman spoke to him, “I know your valour of stealing a woman. Warriors never prattle, instead they act.”

When Ravan charged seven sharp arrows over him, he easily countered them. Both exchanged deadly shafts over each other, and none was getting hurt. Ravan then charged a *kalagni* shaft, gifted by Brahma, which hit the forehead of Lakshaman. He was in swoon for a while, missing his grip over the bow, but soon he recomposed himself. Swiftly he cut down Ravan’s bow and shot three shafts over him. Ravan was severely injured and went unconscious. Getting back his consciousness he found himself drenched in perspiration and blood. He took out the potent weapon (*shakti* शक्ति) obtained from Brahma. That looked like a smoking fire ball, and he charged that over Lakshaman. Despite his swift shafts, he couldn’t save himself, and the *shakti* hit his chest grievously. He fell unconscious, and his body looked being torched with fire. Ravan rushing close to him, tried to lift him in his arms. Lo and behold! One who was capable of lifting three worlds together with *mandrachal*, the *Himalayas* and *meru* could not budge the younger brother of Bharat (6-59-111).

Note: The divinity of Bharat is equally significant to note who by dint of his penance had gained enough potential to ward off evils. Moreover, he had always prayed for the wellbeing of his wandering brothers in exile. Bharat was considered an incarnation of disc, and Lakshaman was an incarnation of serpent couch of *Narayan*. Bharat renounced the royal comfort and stayed in similar condition of forest life at *Nandigram*. He was in fact wandering soul of the supreme spirit, *Narayan* which was earlier indicated by *garud*, by his statement अहं सखा ते काकुत्स्थ प्रियः प्राणो वहिश्चरः । 6-50-46. The weight of righteousness has become heavier to the sinner like Ravan that he was not able to budge him.

Although Lakshaman was hit by *shakti*, he maintained his gravity of being an eternal part and parcel of *Narayan* (6-59-112 विष्णोरमीमांस्य भागमात्मानं ).

(Note: It is also noteworthy to recall that earth is supported over *sheshanag* hoods. How the obliging earth would release the bond with the one who supports her!)

Hanuman stormed over the site where Ravan was trying his strength to lift Lakshaman. He slapped heavily over Ravan who fell on his knees and went unconscious. Bleeding through his mouth and ears Ravan took shelter in the rear part of his chariot. The celestial beings hailed the humiliation of Ravan.

Hanuman lifted Lakshaman in his arms and brought to Ram. *shakti* afflicting Lakshaman soon deserted him and came back to Ravan. Ravan also recovered from his fit, and became equipped with a large bow and sharp shafts.



Lakshaman recalling his divinity, recovered soon to his normal strength and freshness. (6-59-122 आश्वस्तश्च विशल्यश्च लक्ष्मणः शत्रुमुदन् ॥ विष्णोरमीमांस्य भागमात्मानं प्रत्यनुस्मरन् ).

Ram realized the defeat of eminent warriors of his side. Holding his bow, he forthwith moved forward to contain Ravan's forward movement. Hanuman coming to him reminded him of his limitation and constraint of being on foot, and he offered him his shoulder to carry him swiftly from one place to another. Ram obliging Hanuman by occupying his shoulders.

Chasing Ravan, Ram rebuked him, and reminded him of his sinful acts. Hearing his hurt rending words, Ravan caused grievous injury to Hanuman who was his carrier. Getting injured the valour of Hanuman got further enhanced, but Ram was enraged by his act of injuring Hanuman.

Soon he destroyed each and every constituent of Ravan's chariot. When Ravan was standing over ground, he struck shafts over his chest. As a result Ravan lost grip of his bow and the bow fell down over the ground. Following in quick succession, Ram cut his crown into pieces, and Ravan was forced to stand over ground, weaponless and crownless. Showing mercy upon him, he spared his life mentioning, "You are tired today. Come later equipped with new weapons."

Humiliated, Ravan entered Lanka. The celestial beings were extremely happy to witness such a humiliating retreat of Ravan to Lanka.

When Ravan had left the ground, Ram took out the sharp arrows from the body of his eminent monkeys who recovered soon from the injury caused in the battle field.

### 6-60 Waking up of Kumbhakarn (98 / 2449)

When Ravan was back to his palace, he was pale and dejected due to humiliation of the battle field. While addressing the demons, he revealed, "(i) Brahma's words appear to be true today. When he granted me boon of immunity against gods, *gandharv*, *yaksh*, demons, and *nag*, he indicated the potent danger from humans. (ii) Long time ago, king *Anarany* of the *Ikshvaku* family had cursed me that a member of his family would cause complete annihilation of my race. It seems Ram is that person indicated by *Anarany*. (iii) Earlier when I raped *Vedvati*, she had cursed me, and Sita appears to be the manifestation of that curse. (iv) Due to my lifting of *Kailas*, *Uma* felt uncomfortable, and she cursed my death due to a woman. (v) I had ridiculed the monkey form of *Nandishwar*, and he cursed the elimination of my family from the monkeys. (vi) When I teased Rambha, wife of Nal kubar, I was cursed to die if I raped any woman in future. (vii) Similar curse was hurled by Brahma when I had teased Punjiksthala, daughter of Varun, that an attempt to rape with a woman would cause my death."

Ravan exhorted the demons to protect Lanka from this calamity. He recalled the contribution of Kumbhakarn, "He is a renowned and invincible warrior. If he is awakened, he can kill the monkeys, Ram and Lakshaman. He sleeps for either six, or seven, or

eight or nine months. He is sleeping from the time he gave me his counsels, and it is now nine months. All attempts should be made to wake him up.”

Kumbhkarn was sleeping in a secluded cave which was one *yojan* wide and one *yojan* long. The entry door of the cave was sky high. The cave was full of fragrance of fresh flowers. Ten thousand demons arrived to wake him up. Initially they were blown out at the entry gate itself from the vigorous wind generated by breathing of Kumbhakarn. With utmost effort they could enter the cave. He was sleeping fully dressed. The golden crown over his head was like brilliant sun. The golden armlets had further enhanced his personality. Before waking up, collection of all sorts of animals, wine, and blood to appease his hunger, was kept ready near him.

They began him waking with the application of sandal paste over his body which earlier had odor of flesh and blood. They recited his glory, blew conches and other instruments but there was no change, and he continued sleeping. Hundreds of pitchers of water were poured into his ears, camels and other animals were forced to run over him but he didn't respond. Lastly when thousand elephants were run over him, he quit his slumber and got up. He was very hungry and soon he finished all food stuff of camels, buffalos, cows, and goats gathered for him. He finished all the pots of blood and wine.

The demons with great courage gathered around him. He enquired from the demons, “Why did you wake me up? Is everything fine in Lanka?”

Yupaksh, the secretary to Ravan, submitted with folded hands, “We are passing through a very critical period which we hadn't faced earlier while fighting gods. An ordinary human, Ram had devastated untold misery over Lanka. Earlier, his messenger, a monkey came and burnt entire Lanka to ashes. Now the city is under siege of monkeys from all around. Today, the demon king Ravan has been spared life on the grace of Ram. He was humiliated over the battle ground and made weaponless and crownless.”

Kumbhakarn assured them, “He would devour all the monkeys, and their blood would irrigate the earth. Ram and Lakshaman would also be eliminated within no time. First, I will go to the battle ground, and eliminating the enemy I would see Ravan.

Hearing his assertive assurance, Mahodar spoke to him politely, “Let us first meet Ravan, and then take further action.” Kumbhakarn agreed to his submission. In the meanwhile, Ravan got the news of awakening of Kumbhakarn. The demons sought his permission to fetch Kumbhakarn to him. He gladly consented, and awaited his arrival at his palace.

Kumbhkarn asked for some more refreshment before leaving to meet Ravan. After gulping down two thousand pots of wine, he felt fresh and moved out to see Ravan.

While walking through streets of Lanka, his mountainous body was seen by some of the monkeys. They got scared, and went running to Ram to inform him about a strange creature in Lanka.

### 6-61 Ram learnt about Kumbhakarn (40 / 2489)

When Kumbhakarn walked through streets he appeared like Trivikram who had appeared to measure the universe (पुरा नारायणं यथा 6-61-2). Ram also took a look at Kumbhakarn and he enquired from Vibhishan, "Who is this creature in Lanka? Is he a demon or monster? He appears to be a moving dark cloud with ever present lightning over his head."

Vibhishan narrated the whole story, "From his childhood he is like this. He is son of Vishrava, and is the tallest among all the demons. Quantum of his food intake is very high. Scared by his devouring of the creatures coming in his view, people complained to Indra. Indra attacked over him with his bolt. Later, he broke the tusk of *airavat*, elephant of Indra, and pounded with that the chest of Indra. He became unconscious. Consequently gods and demons approached Brahma, and sought the solution, otherwise soon Kumbhakarn would make the earth empty of all leaving beings. Brahma himself came to see him, and trembled to see his huge form. He cursed him to sleep for ever like a corpse. Instantly, Kumbhakarn fell asleep. Seeing his curse, Ravan prayed Brahma, "Have mercy on him and grant him some liberty." Brahma agreed to allow him awake for a single day after the slumber of six months."

To dispel the fear from the mind of monkeys, Vibhishan advised Ram to convey to Neel, "This is not a living being, rather it is a mechanical device created by demons."

Ram soon advised Neel to make all preparations of laying siege around Lanka.

### 6-62 Kumbhakarn met Ravan (24 / 2513)

Passing through the main streets of Lanka Kumbhakarn received warm welcome of the residents who showered flowers over him. When he arrived at the palace of Ravan, he offered his salutation over his feet. Ravan greeted him warmly by embracing him. Kumbhakarn taking his seat enquired from Ravan, "Why did you wake me up? What help do you need from me?"

Ravan presented the updates to him, "Since long you were sleeping. Sri Ram (6-62-14 एष दाशरथिः श्रीमान् सुग्रीवसहितो बली । समुद्रं लङ्घयित्वा तु मूलं नः परिकृन्तति ।।) son of Dasartha in cooperation with monkeys' king Sugriv bridged the sea and coming over to Lanka has caused great loss to us. Our selected warriors have been killed, and our entire family is on the brink of disaster. We have run short of resources for our treasury has become empty. I have pinned great hope over you. Never before, we faced such a calamity. Now only you can save us. You have great affection for us. I didn't make such request to any of my relatives earlier."

(Note: For the first time Ravan has expressed respectful address to Ram by adding *Sri श्री* to his name. In some versions of valmiki, in place of श्रीमान् only रामः is found.

### 6-63 Kumbhakarn criticized Ravan ( 58 / 2571)

Responding to Ravan's request, Kumbhakarn expressed his opinion freely, "In this respect you had been warned earlier also (refer *sarg 5*) when I was awake and a war council was summoned for discussion on this issue. At that time, Ram hadn't crossed the sea and was camping on the other shore. There was time left to save the demons' race from destruction. The sensible king should always act in advance for getting maximum benefit of *sam*, *dan*, *bhed* i.e. conciliation, gift and dissension. Before using these policies he should properly assess the extent of loss and gain in having an encounter with the enemy. If there is a probability of loss, use gift policy, and go for truce. If neither loss nor gain is expected, go for dissension and conciliation. If gain is expected then only go for encounter. There is a need to consider the use of these five factors with a balanced mind. For a success, it is always necessary to derive maximum benefits from the advice of sensible ministers."

Elaborating his view point and referring to the earlier discussion Kumbhakarn mentioned, "We had also discussed about the appropriateness of time to attain *dharm* (righteousness), *arth* (wealth), and *kam* (pleasure). One should always not be after attaining *kam*, i.e., pleasure only. Obviously, out of five factors, there emerges two broad combinations of actions: (i) loss + gain + righteousness (*dharm धर्म*) + wealth (*arth अर्थ*) + pleasure (*kam काम*), and (ii) loss + gain + conciliation (*sam साम*) + gift (*dan दान*) + dissension (*bhed भेद*). You ignored the advice of those who differed from you, and preferred to hear them who talked supporting your immoral acts pleasing to your ears. I wish you could have paid heed to the words of your beloved Mandodari, and my brother Vibhishan (6-63-21). Now you do what you wish."

Reacting to Kumbhakarn, Ravan raised his eye brows and spoke, "This is not the time for discussing what has gone by. Don't teach me lessons. I didn't seek your support to hear these instructive counsels. One's own is that person who acts according to the situation. It is time to save the family from the brink of disaster."

Kumbhakarn sensed the anger lurking in the mind of Ravan, and he immediately assured him, "I would go alone over the battle ground and kill Ram and his other supporters. I want to see that before your death, I must sacrifice my life. Soon I would produce to you the head of Ram, and thereafter, Sita will be permanently yours."

### 6-64 Mahodar's short cut (36 / 2607)

Mahodar, one of the valorous warriors, reacted sharply to the statement of Kumbhakarn, and addressing him he spoke, "Your teachings are not new. Ravan, the mightiest king of the demons, is fully aware of what to do and what not to do. He knows the appropriateness of time of an action. For a king most important is the attainment of pleasure and his effort to attain this is appreciable. As regards your moving to battle ground alone, is not proper. Ram has been a renowned archer and he killed the demons

in Janasthan alone. How would you be successful alone fighting with a warrior of this stature? There is no parallel of him among humans (6-64-18)."

(Note: This statement confirms the supreme divinity of Ram. Even demons have accepted this as a fact that Ram has no parallel among humans, which means he is from supernatural world and supreme himself.)

Addressing Ravan he advised a short cut to gain Sita's favour, "An announcement should be made in the city that Mahodar, Dwijihva, Sanharadi, Kumbhakarn, and Vitardan are leaving for combat with Ram. If the enemy survives our attack, and we also come back alive, using our skill of sorcery, we will have arrows fixed on our bleeding body inscribing name of Ram. Coming to you, we will announce that we have devoured Ram and Lakshaman and his army has been eliminated. This will be announced in the city, and a celebration shall be organized for giving precious gifts to the demons and enjoying the occasion with wine and dances. You will also grace the celebration by your personal participation in the revelry. Sita will come to know about the celebration, and thereafter, you approach her alone. She has been using royal facilities, and when she will come to know of end of Ram and Lakshaman, finding no option she would prefer to avail your offer. I believe this is how you can win her favour and attain your objective without visiting the battle field anymore."

#### 6-65 Kumbhakarn to Battleground (57/ 2664)

Kumbhakarn rebuking Mahodar, spoke to Ravan, "The real warriors don't talk, they perform. Mahodar is a sycophant, and persons like him are responsible for the present pass. I would now proceed to the battle ground alone and bring the head of Ram."

Laughing, Ravan supported his views and said, "Mahodar is scared of Ram, and that is why he talks of short cuts to avoid the combat. I would advise you to go with army. Monkeys are very naughty and they would cause injury to your vital organs."

Ravan dressed Kumbhakarn with varieties of gold and other precious jewels over his arms, ears, hands and head. Kumbhakarn looked like a brilliant sun. His trident was also tipped with gold. His chest was protected with strong gold shield. He was wearing a red garland, and Ravan put a heavy gold necklace over him. He also put fresh flower garland around his neck and wished him victory.

Circumambulating Ravan, when Kumbhakarn intended to move out, he appeared like *trivikram bhagwan* (6-65-31 त्रिविक्रम कृतोत्साहो नारायण इवावभौ) stepping up to measure the universe. He was six hundred bows wide and one hundred bows high. At the time of his departure, trumpet and conch sounds rented the air. He moved out by stepping over the ramparts of the city. Huge army of chariots, horses, elephants and infantry accompanied him.

When he came out he saw sea of monkeys around the city. He expressed his mercy on them and mentioned, "Monkeys are jewels of gardens. They haven't caused any harm to us on their own, and therefore, they need not be killed. The root cause of this calamity is

Ram and Lakshaman. I would eliminate them, and the poor monkeys would melt away themselves.

While he was stepping forward occurrence of bad omens took place: a vulture perched over his trident, meat loving birds gave a clockwise round of him, jackals vomited fire, wind was harsh, sky was overcast with dust, meteorites fell, sun dropped fire balls. Despite all such forebodings, Kumbhakarn was not deterred, and he continued his movement forward with thunderous sound.

#### **6-66 Panicked monkeys (33 / 2697)**

Kumbhakarn's formidable personality caused panic among monkeys. They were running helter-skelter. Angad addressed Nal, Neel, Kumud and Gavaksh to convince them about the magic of demons. While coming back they hurled heavy rocks and trees over Kumbhakarn. He was not bothered about their attack, for all the rocks and trees striking his body had turned into pieces. Kumbhakarn's moving steps continued crushing the scores of monkeys. Getting upset of their failure, and uncertainty of falling prey to the monstrous demon, monkeys again took to their heels. Despite several reminders of Angad and others they didn't listen. They answered, "We love our life, and can't sacrifice ourselves like this."

Somehow, again with great persuasion of Angad, they fall back to Sugriv awaiting his command.

#### **6-67 Ram killed Kumbhakarn (177 / 2874)**

Monkeys had returned with their renewed spirit. They continued showering rocks and trees over Kumbhakarn. Using his mace, Kumbhakarn was able to counter the heaviest of missiles charged by monkeys. He picked up the monkeys in groups of eight, ten, twenty and thirty and devoured them alive. Dwvid targeted him with a hillock. It missed him, and fell over the demons army causing loss of scores of chariots, horses, elephants and demons.

Hanuman commenced showering rocks from sky over his head. With his trident, he easily cut down the hills and trees into pieces. When he intended to move towards the monkeys, Hanuman stood on his way to detain him. Hanuman hit heavily over his head with a large hillock and he was bathed in fat and blood. He became very angry and struck his trident over Hanuman's chest as if *Kartikeya* had struck the *Kronch* mountain (6-67-19). Hanuman was grievously injured, and blood oozed from his mouth. Demons army was delighted to see Hanuman in pitiable condition.

Monkeys were again gripped by panic, and to encourage them, Neel hurled a heavy hillock over him. Using his fist, he easily powdered that rock into dust. Sharabh, Rishabh, Neel, Gavaksh, and Gandhamadan made a concerted attack over him. Catching each of them he rubbed them to bleed. When thousands of monkeys perched over his body and used their nail and teeth to injure him, he felt as if something had just

touched him. At that time he looked like a mountain enhanced by scores of trees. As *garud* eats snakes, similarly he continued devouring monkeys.

Some of the surviving monkeys rushed to Ram to narrate the holocaust of the demon. In the meanwhile, Angad charged a very large hillock over his head, which caused injury to his head. In retaliation, he moved his trident over Angad but he escaped safely. In turn, Angad jumping over him, punched heavily over his chest and he was in swoon. Full of wrath, he pounded Angad with clenched fist of his left hand, and unconscious Angad was down over ground.

Sugriv rushed to help Angad and he charged a heavy hillock over him which struck his chest. Although the hillock was crushed into powder, it enraged him and he hurled his trident over Sugriv. Hanuman caught the trident midway and broke that 1000 *bhar* (unit used to express weight of an item) heavy trident taking support of his knees. Monkeys were elated on breaking of trident by Hanuman.

He was very angry and he picked up a mountain and dashed over Sugriv. When Sugriv fell flat, he picked up unconscious Sugriv from ground, and pressing him between his arms left for Lanka. He thought this will end the war itself. Hanuman was puzzled, and he intended to charge an attack over him but he thought, "Let me wait. The moment Sugriv will regain consciousness, he will come out of his clutch. If I try to recover Sugriv from him, Sugriv will later feel unhappy for that will belittle his status and fame."

By this time, he had entered Lanka holding Sugriv in his arms. The citizens greeted him by showering scented flowers and water. The spray of water and the fragrant flowers helped Sugriv in regaining consciousness. He found himself under the clutch of the demon. Using tooth and nail, Sugriv cut off his nose and ears. He also grievously injured his belly. Soon Sugriv was thrown over ground, but catching sugriv again he began rubbing him over ground. Somehow Sugriv escaped, and springing up like a ball in sky, arrived to Ram.

Losing his nose and ears, he was bathed in blood. Looking dreadful, he returned to battle ground and stormed over monkeys like a hawk. He was very hungry, and picking monkeys in groups he began eating them alive.

Having seen great havoc and loss of monkeys, Lakshaman came forward shooting seven shafts over his chest. He was not disturbed by the charges of Lakshaman. Soon, Lakshaman covered him with his swift arrows and he looked like *anshumali* sun hidden behind the clouds. Coming out of the cover of arrows, he praised Lakshaman, "You are a child, but still I am impressed by your archery. Several mighty gods like Indr, and Varun don't dare face me. I don't want to kill you. I want to kill only Ram. Once Ram is killed others will die automatically."

Lakshaman showed him Ram who was standing with a stable mind. He stormed over him swiftly. Ram charged deadly *Raudastr* causing grievous injury to him. Chasing monkeys he whirled around Ram. Due to pain of piercing arrows, he lost the grip of his

mace. Losing his mace, he used his hands and fists to kill the monkeys. The sharp arrows of Ram caused profuse bleeding over his body.

With a view to contain the destruction caused over monkeys, Lakshaman chalked out a plan and spoke to Ram, "This monster is deadly as well as hungry. It has lost its sense of discrimination and has devoured monkeys and demons together. Let our monkeys get perched over his body which will save their life." When the monkeys perched over him, he became very angry, and threw them off through vigorous shaking of his body.

Ram continued his attack over him, and he was able to counter those deadly arrows of Ram easily. When the shaft used to kill Vali, didn't hurt him at all, Ram, shot *vayavastr* and cut his right arm. The amputated hand, while falling killed several monkeys. Charging another deadly arrow, his left arm was cut, which fell over demons and caused great casualties. Soon, both his legs were cut, and he kept running with his trunk and devouring monkeys. Ram charged a shaft similar to the potential of *brahmdand*, which cut his head off his trunk. His head flying high in sky fell down in Lanka. While falling in Lanka, it caused immense damage to scores of mansions. His trunk fell in sea, and crushing the marine creature went deep into water.

Sages and celestial beings greeted Ram for killing him. Monkeys were overjoyed and hailed Ram's victory with uproarious sound.

#### 6-68 Wailing Ravan (24 / 2898)

When Ravan learnt of falling of Kumbhakarn's head in Lanka, he was cut to the quick. Lamenting loudly, he fell over ground unconscious. Devantak, Narantak, Trishira and Atikaya were shocked by the killing of their uncle. Mahodar and Mahaparshv were deeply grieved with the news of killing of their step<sup>30</sup> brother, Kumbhakarn. Time and again Ravan had spell of fit remembering his brother. He expressed, "There is no use of availing this kingdom. Losing Prahasht and Kumbhakarn has made me hollow. I can't sustain the shock any more. I would soon follow the path set by Kumbhakarn. Now I repent for ignoring the advice of Vibhishan. Today's sorrow is the consequence of driving out of noble Vibhishan (6-68-23 तस्यायं कर्मणः प्राप्तो विपाको मम शोकदः । यन्मया धार्मिकः श्रीमान् स निरस्तो विभीषणः । ।) from Lanka."

#### 6-69 Angad killed Narantak (96 / 2994)

Ravan was consoled by his son Trishira, who reminded him of his immense potency, "You have several boons and weapons in your possession obtained from Brahma. You have a mighty chariot pulled by one thousand asses. You shouldn't lament like an ordinary being. You have been victorious over the earth and you can readily kill Ram. Alternatively, if you permit me, I can go to the battle ground and kill Ram as if *garud* kills a snake. You should no longer worry about this."

<sup>30</sup> Shlok 6-68-7 and 8 describe the relationship of eminent demons with Ravan.



Ravan's three other sons Narantak, Devanatak and Atkaya also joined Trishira with an intention to console their father and take an opportunity to visit the battle ground. Ravan was greatly encouraged by their desire to go to battle ground. These sons of Ravan had been famous warriors and had no record of defeat in the past. Ravan readily agreed and sent them with his two brothers Mahodar and Mahaparshv to provide them necessary protection.

All the six, two brothers and four sons of Ravan departed for combat with Ram. As a customary practice, before they left, they touched several herbs and fragrances and circumambulated Ravan with respect. Mahodar mounted an elephant called *sudarshan* from the dynasty of *airavat*. Trishira rode a chariot fully equipped with his select weapons. His grandeur was enhanced by three crowns one over each of his three heads. The greatest archer, Atikaya rode another brilliant chariot equipped with swords, clubs, maces and arrows. Narantak mounted on a white horse as magnificent as *Ucchaihshrava*. He appeared like *kartikeya* mounting a peacock (6-69-30). Devantak held high *parigh* (iron clubs) in both of his hands, as if *Vishnu* had held *mandrachal* (6-69-30) during stirring of ocean. Mahaparshv equipped with mace in his hand, looked like mighty *kuber*.

Coming out of Lanka, accompanied by huge army of demons, those six great warriors took a look at hordes of monkeys. With the trumpeting and vocal uproars they soon got engaged in combat. While demons used arrows to prevent the forward movement of monkeys, in retaliation monkeys hurled heavy rocks and trees over them. Besides missile using missiles of rocks, monkeys also used their tooth and nail to kill the demons in one to one duels. While demons snatched rocks and trees from monkeys and used over them, in similar fashion, monkeys also forcibly grabbed the weapons from demons and killed them with their weapons.

Narantak riding his horse pierced through the hordes of monkeys. Using his spear he caused their death. Sugriv noticed the terrible end of monkeys on the hands of Narantak. He commanded Angad to take care of Narantak. Soon Angad was on his way and restrained his movement. He asked Narantak to use the spear over his chest. The demon, hurled the spear over Angad which fell broken over ground. Angad using his slap, killed the Narantak's horse. Coming to ground, Narantak punched his heavy fist over Angad's forehead and he was bathed in blood. Regaining his balance, Angad pounded a heavy fist over the demon's chest, and he fell dead over the ground.

### **6-70 Hanuman, Rishabh, and Neel killed eminent demons (67 / 3061)**

When Narantak was killed, other eminent demon warriors Devantak, Trishira, and Mahodar, who had come with him surrounded Angad. Picking up a tree, Angad made an attack over Devantak, but that was countered by arrows of Trishira. Although Angad was alone, and he was to face three demons warriors, he didn't lose heart. With the heavy slap of Angad, Mahodar lost his elephant. Using the tusk of the dead elephant, Angad assaulted Devantak. The demon was terribly shaken, but he charged his iron club

over Angad and he fell on his knees. Soon he recovered and leapt up, but Trishira shot three arrows in his forehead.

Hanuman and Neel rushed to help Angad, who was fighting alone with three demons. Neel hurled a massive rock over Trishira which was countered into pieces with his swift arrows. Encouraged by this, Devantak charged his club over Hanuman. In retaliation, Hanuman punched his fist over his head and Devantak dropped dead.

Trishira continued showering sharp arrows over Neel. Mounting another elephant, Mahodar rushed to Neel and hitting him with his sharp arrows he made Neel unconscious. After a while when Neel regained his consciousness, he took up a hillock full of trees and dashed over Mahodar. This deadly charge took the life of elephant and Mahodar together.

Trishira was in full wrath over the death of his uncle. He showered deadly arrows over Hanuman. Hanuman also continued showering trees and rocks but they were brought down to pieces by the swift arrows of Trishira. Hanuman ran close to Trishira and killed his horses. The demon jumping down on the ground shot a potential shakti, but Hanuman caught it midway and broke into two pieces. Trishira then held a sword and attacked over Hanuman. Getting injured by his sword, Hanuman punched over his chest and he fell unconscious. Taking his sword, Hanuman began killing other demons. Trishira getting back his consciousness, soon bounced over Hanuman. Three heads of Trishira came in the grip of Hanuman, and he cut them asunder using his sword. Trishira was dead.

Having seen the end of four great warriors, Mahaparshv took the command with mace in his hand. Rishabh came forward to face the dreaded demon. The demon pounded his mace over his chest and he fell injured over the ground. After a while when he recovered, he punched his slap over the demon. The demon fell over ground like an uprooted tree. Taking his mace in his hand, he produced a roaring sound. For sometime, the demon was unconscious. On recovering, the demon pounded heavily over Rishabh, and made him unconscious. Recovering from the fit, Rishabh charged the demon's mace over the demon himself, and that caused his ultimate end.

With the fall of Mahaparshv, five of six eminent warriors had met their end. Seeing such a great loss, the demons' army ran away from the battle ground.

### **6-71 Lakshaman killed Atikaya (116 / 3177)**

Out of four sons and two step brothers of Ravan who had visited together the battle ground, Atikaya was the only surviving son, and none of the brothers could stand the mortal attack of the monkeys.

Atikaya was blessed with a monstrous body. Seeing him riding a mammoth chariot pulled by thousand horses, monkeys got an impression of revival of Kumbhakarn. He appeared as if *bhagwan Trivikram* had expanded his form (**6-71-8**). Panicked monkeys took refuge to Ram.

Ram, taking a look at Atikaya, enquired from Vibhishhan, “Who is this demon blessed with such a huge body? His chariot is equipped with varieties of ten numbers of large bows. Two swords, having six cubit long handle, and fifteen cubit in length, hang on the sides of his chariot. The chariot’s flag is marked with the sing of *rahu*. There are four charioteers over his chariot. He has a red garland around his neck. His face between two earrings look like full moon flanked by twin *punarvasu nakshtra* (6-71-24 पुनर्वसुन्तरगतं परिपूर्णो निशाकरः). Looking like lion among demons, he is striding towards me.”

Vibhishan informed Ram, “He is worthy son of Ravan from his second wife Dhanyamalini. His name is Atikaya. He commands honor among demons, and is champion of several weapons. He has profound knowledge of scriptures and statecraft. He has earned boon of immortality from Brahma. The shield and chariot have also been gifted by him only.”

While they were talking, Atikaya countered the attack of all the eminent monkeys Dwvid, Maind and others. Steering through them he came straight to Ram and invited him for the fight. Lakshaman heard his challenge, and moved forward producing terrific sound from the string of his bow. Seeing Lakshaman drawing close to him, he spoke, “You are child. I can spare your life. Don’t wake up the dreaded dragon. I can soon dispatch you to the death world.” Soon he loaded an arrow over the string.

Lakshaman retorted, “Come on! Don’t prattle unnecessarily. I am ready to see your performance. You know lord *trivikram* was a child (6-71-64 बालेन विष्णुना लोकास्त्र्यः कान्तास्त्रिविक्रमैः), but his performance is known to all of us.”

Soon they were engaged in fierce fighting. They continued countering each other’s shafts. Lakshaman hit an arrow that caused injury over his forehead. Later, he also shot a shaft in his chest. Lakshman had to bleed, and taking out that shaft from his chest, Lakshaman, again charged another shaft invoking fire god potential. Atikaya countered his shaft with a shaft having potential of *mantr* of sun. Atikay’s *twashta* arrow was countered by *Indr* arrow of Lakshaman. Lakshaman continued showering arrows over him, but he was not bothered, because he was blessed with an impregnable shield. He caused once more swoon to Lakshaman by hitting through a serpentine arrow. Lakshaman recovered soon and when he was about to shoot a shaft, *Vayu* god came to him and mentioned, “This demon has a shield from Brahma which is impregnable. You need to charge *Brahmasht* over him.”

Lakshaman charged that shaft with the potential of *Brahmasht* and shot at him. The demon used several weapons to counter the arrow of Lakshaman, but he didn’t succeed and soon his head was found severed from his body. He was dead, and his huge army ran away in panic to Lanka.

## 6-72 Ravan’s anxiety (19 / 3196)

Hearing the end of Atikaya and others Ravan got extremely astonished and shocked. He recollected how one by one his several invincible warriors Prahast, Kumbhkarn,

Akampan and others had been eliminated. He thought, “Indrajeet had put these two brothers in deadly serpent bond and it was impossible to survive but I wonder how they countered that bond and came out victorious. Indeed, free from all sorrows and afflictions, Ram is *Narayan*<sup>31</sup> (6-72 -11 तं मन्ये राघवं वीरं नारायणामनामयम्).”

He warned the guards to be extremely vigilant and directed them, “Whether morning, dusk , or night, always keep the entry fully secured and barred. Keep strict watch over any movement to Sita in *ashok vatika*. The camps of army contingents have to be specially guarded.”

Directing thus, with a pale face and agitated mind he entered his inner palace.

### 6-73 Ram and Lakshaman made unconscious (74 / 3270)

When Ravan was immersed in sorrow of loss of several eminent sons, brothers and warriors, Indrajeet consoled him, “I will avenge today itself the killing of all our near and dear ones. I will show you how Ram and Lakshaman would meet end of their life. All the celestial beings would watch my valour, like the valour of *trivikram* in the *ygya* of demon king Bali (6-73 -07 द्रक्ष्यन्ति मे विक्रममप्रमेयं । विष्णोरिवोगं बलियज्ञवाटे).”

Riding a chariot pulled by asses he moved out of the city to the battle ground. Huge army followed him for his protection. Before he moved Ravan had blessed him for victory.

Coming to the battle ground, first he performed worship of the fire god under the protection of the demons. Alighting from the chariot he lit sacred fire, and offered him sandal, flowers, and paddy corn. In oblation he used *havishya* (sweetened rice). *Baheda* (*bibhitika* 6-73-21/22/23) firewood was used in oblation. He used red cloth, iron ladle, and black goat in the sacrificial ritual. The fire flame had a clockwise twist, which indicated his ritual was successful as experienced in one of such rituals performed by him earlier. During the sacrifice, he invoked *brahmastr* and charged his bow, arrow, sword, chariots, charioteer and horses etc. This scared sun, moon, other planets, and celestial beings of the universe. Subsequently he disappeared with his chariot.

Thereafter he joined the demon army and encouraged them to fight the monkeys boldly. Maintaining his invisibility, he himself showered arrows over the monkeys. Monkeys fought valiantly by showering heavy rocks and logs. Countering all the missiles of monkeys, he injured the eminent monkeys: Gandhamadan by 18 arrows, Maind by 7

<sup>31</sup> This *shlok* 6-72-11 is not found in some versions of *Valmiki*. One may refer *shlok* 6-6-17 / 18, where Ravan expresses his own impression about the divinity of Ram that he is capable of either crossing the sea, bridging it or drying up. In the background of the *shlok* 6-6-17 / 18, the *shlok* 6-72-11 appears to be relevant. Ravan was actually in doubt about the divinity of Ram at initial stage, but gradually his ignorance was cleared, and through 6-72-11 he accepts his supreme divinity. By this time he has almost lost all his sons except Indrajeet, he was at a point of no return, and therefore he couldn't move for truce. Upon death of Kumbhakarn, he had expressed his renunciation from the world, and he mentioned that it was of no use to live longer here.

arrows, Gaj by 5 arrows, Jambvan by 10 arrows, Neel by 30 arrows. For Sugriv, Rishabh, Angad and Dwvid he used several potent arrows and made them lifeless. Since he was invisible it was difficult for the monkeys to target him. In a bid to locate him in sky, when the monkeys raised their eyes towards sky, he shot arrows in their eyes. All the monkeys were blood soaked, and were lying flat over ground.

Subsequently he moved to Ram and Lakshaman and showered arrows over them. Ram spoke to Lakshaman, "Indrajeet has been spirited by the potential of *brahmastr* and we have no option because we can't see him. His greatest strength is his invisibility. We have to bear with him. Seeing us unconscious, he would be back to Lanka, announcing his victory."

Indrajeet made flat the entire army including Ram, and Lakshaman. He went back successfully to Lanka and saluted in the feet of Ravan.

#### 6-74 Hanuman brought herbal mountain (77 / 3347)

Only Vibhishan and Hanuman had escaped the lethal attack of Indrajeet. Out five parts of the day, Indrajeet had been active through the period of four parts. He had withdrawn in the last, i.e., the fifth period. In his mission, six hundred seventy million (6-74-12) monkeys were affected. Vibhishan and Hanuman moved around encouraging the monkeys, "Ram and Lakshaman had suffered the pain to honour *brahmastr* used by Indrajeet. Both the brothers will regain the spirit, there is no doubt in it."

It was getting darker, and finding it difficult to identify the monkeys, Hanuman arranged a fire flame. Carrying that flame in hand, they inspected the monkeys lying on ground. Taking a look at the eminent ones, Vibhishan and Hanuman arrived where Jambavan was lying. When enquired by Vibhishan, Jambvan responded, "I am suffering immense pain of arrows stabbed deep in my body. But don't worry, tell me whether Hanuman is alive and conscious." Vibhishan was surprised and he queried, "You didn't enquire the well being of Ram and Lakshaman and you are more concerned about Hanuman. Why?" Jambvan convinced him, "If Hanuman is alive we all are deemed to be alive. His service is very essential at the moment and nobody else would be able to do that."

When Hanuman saluted in his feet, he mentioned, "On the *Himalayas*, between *Kailas* and *rishabh* mountain there lies a mountain of life giving herbs. The herbs are of four categories: *mritsanjivani* (मृतसंजीवनी), *vishalyakarni* (विशल्यकर्णी), *suvarnkarni* (सुवर्णकर्णी), and *sandhani* (संधानी) (6-74-33). They always emit light. You have to come with those herbs at the earliest."

Before leaving for the Himalayas, Hanuman expanded his body to a mountainous form similar to the one which he had adopted while crossing the sea to arrive in Lanka to meet Sita. Rocking sea, mountains and the city of Lanka, he flew towards the Himalayas. When he arrived on the Himalayas he visualized the abode of various sages

and gods: (i) *brahmakosh and rajatalay*<sup>32</sup> (ii) *Indr*, (iii) *Rudr* from where he charged arrow over *Tripurasur*, (iv) *Hayagreev*<sup>33</sup> हयग्रीव, (6-74-59) (v) *brahamshir*,<sup>34</sup> (vi) death god, (vii) fire god, (viii) *kuber*, (ix) twelve suns, (x) Four faced *brahma*, (xi) bow of *Shiv*, (xii) navel of earth, (xiii) *brushabh*, mount of *Shiv*, (xiv) *kailas*, (xv) *rishabh* mountain.

When he landed at the herbal mountain, he found the light emitting herbs as indicated by Jambvan but soon they disappeared. Probably the deities of the herbs were afraid of presence of a stranger. Hanuman was puzzled, and soon he took the decision to uproot the entire mountain. He successfully brought the herbal mountain to Lanka. Getting the sweep of breeze of the herbal mountain, everyone got up as they had slept for night. Ram and Lakshman also got up causing great joy among the monkeys. The stabbing arrows came out on their own, and there was no sign of injury over the body. It was miraculous revival of the entire team. Hanuman swiftly took back, and restored the herbal mount to its original location between *Kailas* and *rishabh*.

### 6-75 Lanka torched again (69 / 3416)

On recovering from the Indrajeet's deadly assault, Sugriv advised Hanuman, "Before break of the day, let fast footed monkeys set ablaze Lanka." Accordingly they carrying fire flames in their hand, they made an attack over Lanka. Afraid of life, the guards of Lanka deserted their duty. Monkeys enjoyed free hand and entire Lanka was torched second time. (First time Hanuman had torched it during finding mission of Sita). Residents rushed out of their houses quitting their belongings. Gems, gold, corals and pearls melted with the heat of the massive fire. The red colour of burning Lanka reflected in sea, causing sea water to look red.

Enraged Ravan commanded Kumbh and Nikumbh, sons of Kumbhakarn to attack over monkeys. They were given assistance of Yupaksh, Shonitaksh, Prajangh, and Kampan. On command of Sugriv the monkeys occupied their previously fixed gates and locations. Fierce night fighting took place. The flames in the hand of monkeys improved the visibility.

### 6-76 Killing of eminent demon warriors (94 / 3510)

Excited Angad had faced Kampan. The mace of Kampan caused injury over forehead of Angad, and he fell unconscious. When he regained his consciousness, he dashed a heavy rock mass over the demon, and he died immediately.

<sup>32</sup> *Beginning of entry to Vaikunth lok*

<sup>33</sup> *One can visit aushadh giri औषध गिरी today at Thiruvahindpuram (also called Thiruvandipuram), near Cuddalore, Tamil Nadu, India. Hayagreev हयग्रीव has two manifestations here: one with goddess Lakshmi called Lakshmi – Hayagreev लक्ष्मी हयग्रीव, and the other alone in meditative posture called Yoga Hayagreev योग हयग्रीव. Vedantdesik Swami had pleased Hayagreev here with his severe penance.* It is said when Hanuman carried the herb mountain, a part of it has been placed here with the command of lord Hayagreev.

<sup>34</sup> *Present day brahmkapali at badrikasharm*



Finding Kampan dead, Shonitaksh another warrior demon, rushed over Angad. He was riding a chariot and he shot all sorts of arrows causing severe injury to Angad. Later, Angad crushed his chariot, bow and arrows. Shonitaksh renewed his attack holding a sword. Angad very swiftly snatched the sword from him, and grievously incised him diagonally (along the sacred thread – *ygyopaveet*) from left shoulder down to the right belly. Angad shifted his attention to other enemies, but soon he was surrounded by Yupaksh and Prajangh. Shonitaksh also recovered in the meanwhile and he chased Angad with a mace in his hand. Angad was between Shonitaksh and Prajangh, as if moon was between two *vishakha nakshatra* (6-76-15 विशाखयोर्मध्यगतः पूर्णचन्द्र इवावभौ ।

(Note: compare 6-76-15 with 6-71-24 पुनर्वस्वन्तरगतं परिपूर्णो निशाकरः This suggests that both *vishakha* and *punarvasu* are twin stars.)

In the meanwhile Dwvid and Maind rushed to help Angad. Thus three demons were found engaged with three monkeys. Prajangh attacked Angad with a sword. Angad then countered him with *aswakarn* tree and broke his sword. He punched Angad with his fist over his forehead causing swoon to him. Recovering from that Angad slapped him such that his went off his body, and Prajangh was dead. Shonitaksh

When Yupaksh saw that his uncle Prajangh was dead, with tear in his eyes he held a sword for he had no more arrows left with him. He rushed to Angad. In the meanwhile Dwvid pounded over his chest and held him in his arms. Shonitaksh was angry to see his brother Yupaksh trapped in the arms of Dwvid. He punched over the chest of Dwvid with his mace. Dwvid, subsequently snatched his mace when he tried to pound second time on him.

In the mean while Maind arrived, and he punched over chest of Ypuaksh. Dwvid injured the face of Shonitaksh with his sharp nails, and dashing him down over ground, crushed him to death. Maind also trapped Yupaksh within his arms and crushed him to death.

Demons army, finding their three warriors dead, swiftly shifted to the place where son of kumbhakarn, Kumbh was fighting. He consoled the demons and used his arrows to contain the forward movement of the monkeys. Kumbh was an accomplished archer. Dwvid was his first target and he laid him down over ground. Maind rushed to help his younger brother Dwvid, but he also met the same fate and fell unconscious over the ground by sharp arrows of Kumbh. Dwvid, and Maind were maternal uncle of Angad. Now Angad charged rocks and trees over Kumbh but he swiftly cut them away. He also caused severe injury over the eyebrows of Angad. Although it was bleeding, keeping his eyes shut Angad uprooted a huge *sa/* tree and hurled heavily over Kumbh. The demon cutting down that hit Angad severely and he fell unconscious over ground. This news was brought to Ram by some of the monkeys. Ram soon dispatched Jambvan and others to resuce Angad. Kumbh swiftly countered the attack of Jambvan, Vegdarshi and Sushen. Kumbh was so fast that these warriors were not able to see him properly.

In the meanwhile, Sugriv came to assist Angad and other warriors who were fighting Kumbh. All charges of Sugriv were countered very swiftly by Kumbh. Sugriv, in a quick movement leapt over his chariot and snatched his bow from him. He broke his bow and came down the chariot. Sugriv praised him for his superb archery. He also appreciated him worthy like his father Kumbhakarn. Both Sugriv and Kumbh were engaged in wrestling. Sugriv hurled him up so much so that he fell into sea water causing a great tide in the vicinity. Coming out of sea water, he again engaged with Sugriv and dashing him down over ground cramped his chest. Sugriv's shield was broken lose, and he became very furious. He pounded heavily over his chest, and he dropped dead.

#### **6-77 Hanuman killed Nikumbh (24 / 3534)**

When Nikumbh saw that his brother Kumbh was no more, he rushed with an iron club in his hand towards Sugriv. Nikumbh was a mighty warrior, and he wielded so swiftly the club, that the air of the area got ignited. When Hanuman detained him midway, he charged that club over his chest. Striking over Hanuman, the club was itself broken into pieces. It was Hanuman's turn, and he pounded so heavily over his chest that he fell unconscious but soon he recovered and coming to Hanuman held him firmly in his arms. He moved towards Lanka. Demons hailed him for his valour to capture Hanuman, but soon Hanuman released himself from his clutch. He held him down over ground, and broke his head off his neck. Nikumbh was dead.

#### **6-78 Makaraksh on battle ground (21 / 3555)**

Ravan was shocked as well as angry on the news of killing of Kumbh and Nikumbh. He commanded, Makaraksh, son of Khar to move to the battle ground and kill Ram and Lakshaman. The demon offered his respectful round to Ravan and left as commanded. He rode a chariot and was accompanied by demons army. While his chariot moved there was storm of dust, and the flag of the chariot fell down. The charioteer missed the whip to ground. The horses wept and couldn't pick desired speed. Makaraksh ignored all the bad omens and commanded to the army to commence the combat, while he intended to proceed to towards Ram.

#### **6-79 Ram killed Makaraksh (41 / 3596)**

Monkeys observed coming out of Makaraksh with demons army for combat. They charged attack over demons and fierce fighting took place. Makaraksh, using his swift arrows caused heavy casualty to monkeys army.

To contain his movement, Ram came forward to face him. Seeing Ram, he spoke, "You are killer of my father Khar in Janasthan, and since then I am carrying the blaze of revenge in my heart. Somehow I couldn't find you in Janasthan, but today the time has come to settle the score with you." Ram advised him to perform rather than prattle.

Both were engaged in fierce archery. Ultimately, Ram cutdown his bow, damaged his chariot, and he was forced to come down over ground. He charged a deadly trident



obtained from Shiv over Ram. Celstial beings, watching the war from sky, were panicked. Ram easily countered the trident cutting down by his arrow into several pieces. When he rushed with clenched fist to Ram, an arrow of Ram hit heavily over his chest, and he collapsed over ground. The accompanying army ran away to Lanka.

### 6-80 Indrajeet again over battle ground (43 / 3639)

On the news of death of Makaraksh, with clenched teeth, Ravan commanded Indrajeet to march to the battle ground. Indrajeet was out from the city, and he performed the oblation to fire on way to the battle ground. His weapons were used as *kuhs* mat, *baheda* tree as firewood<sup>35</sup>, iron ladle, and dark black goat in oblation. Women clad in red cloth appeared during the oblation, and flaming fire turning clockwise indicated his success in oblation. He invoked the favourite deity to maintain his potential to remain invisibile. With the renewed spirit of oblation, he commenced the marathon mission.

When he drove to Ram and Lakshaman he found them like three hooded<sup>36</sup> serpent. He was invisible, and the movement of his chariot didn't produce any sound. His sharp arrows injured Ram and Lakshaman, and to counter his arrows, two brothers also covered the sky with their swift arrows. They also caused injury to invisible Indrajeet, as was evident from their blood soaked shafts falling down. The demon had created dense cover of fog around himself, and because of this his chariot was not visible at all. Ram and Lakshaman very skillfully maintained showering swiftly the arrows in the same direction from which the demon's arrows were seen coming.

Fed up of his treacherous sorcery, Lakshaman sought the permission of Ram to charge *brhamashtr* but Ram prevented him.

Finding Ram and Lakshaman fully vigilant, Indrajeet went back to Lanka.

### 6-81 Killing of fake Sita (34 / 3673)

While being in Lanka, Indrajeet was reminded of death of eminent warriors. Getting overwhelmed with their memory, he arrived over the battle ground from the western gate of the city. This time he had fake Sita sitting in the back of his chariot.

Finding him back to fighting, monkeys lead by Hanuman rushed towards him. Hanuman saw Sita sitting over his chariot. He was surprised, and looked at her carefully and could see the same Sita whom he had met in *ashok vatika*, "Single lock of hair, drooped down gaze, pale face, soiled sari etc."

<sup>35</sup> *Shlok 23-26 of sarg 73 of yuddh kand have been used verbatim to describe the oblation sarifice of Indrajeet in this sarg 80, shlok 7-10.*

<sup>36</sup> *Quivers on either shoulder projecting upward, flanking the head in the centre, gave an impression of three hoods.*

When Indrajeet openly dragged Sita by her hair, Hanuman burst into anger, "Fool! Touching Sita by hair would soon bring your end. Being born in the glorious lineage of sage Pulastya, you are a demon indeed. Assaulting of women is prohibited in scriptures."

While Hanuman charged rocks heavily over him, he prevented with his sharp arrows the movement of the monkeys.

Indrajeet justified his action, "All actions are permitted to subdue the enemy." Pulling his sword, he attacked over Sita and severed her body in two parts diagonally from left shoulder down to right abdomen. This pained Hanuman to the core of his heart. While monkeys were shocked, demons rejoiced the killing.

### **6-82 Hanuman fought valiantly (28 / 3701)**

Hanuman was in great wrath and encouraging the fleeing monkeys he swooped over demons. Large score of casualty of demons, caused Indrajeet to fight with the monkeys. Hanuman huled a rock mass with high momentum over Indrajeet, but his charioteer saved him by shifting the chariot swiftly.

Although there was large scale carnage of demons, Hanuman was down with the shock of losing Sita. He asked the monkeys to withdraw, "What is the use of fighting? When Sita is no more, what to do with this Lanka!. Let us go back and intimate Ram accordingly."

Indrajeet getting back to Lanka commenced *ygya* in the temple of goddess *nikumbhila* for the welfare and progress of demons race.

### **6-83 Wailing Ram (44 / 3745)**

Ram heaing the great tumult of fighting, advised Jambvan to go and assist Hanuman. While Jambvan reached the western gate, he found Hanuman and other monkeys on the return journey. Coming to Ram, Hanuman broke the news of killing of Sita by Indrajeet over the battle ground.

No sooner he heard this than he dropped unconscious over ground. Monkeys made several efforts by spraying fragrant water over his face but he didn't recover.

While holding him in his arms, Lakshaman spoke, "The concept of *dharm* (righteousness) and *adharm* (sin) does not have any base. Those involved in *adharm* are seen flourishing. For example, Ravan being fully involved in *adharm* is the owner of Lanka and gods are subservient to him. On the other hand observing *dharm* you are in trouble. *Arth* (wealth) has a great role in life. For *dharm* of honoring the father's words you had disowned the state of Ayodhya. What I see that *purusharth* (पुरुषार्थ adventure) is only rewarded in this life, whether it is performed through *dharm* or *adharm*."

Concluding, Lakshaman mentioned, "Whatever I have spoken is intended only to encourage you and discard sorrow."

#### **6-84 Vibhishan consoled Ram (23 / 3768)**

Vibhishan had the responsibility of putting up the monkeys to their specified location around gates of Lanka, after close of the day's fighting. Completing the assignment, when he came back with his companion demons, he saw Lakshaman in sorrow and tears, while unconscious Ram was lying in his lap.

He enquired, "What has happened?" Lakshaman replied, "Hanuman has brought the news that Indrajeet has killed Sita ." Vibhishan immediately termed this as baseless and totally false. He continued, "This could never happen. The fatuation of Ravan over Sita would never allow Indrajeet to do this. It is a magical trick to divert our attention. He must have gone to goddess *nikumbhila*'s temple for performing oblations. Once he completes his mission of oblation, he would emerge invincible. We have to be quick, and with Lakshaman we need to go and disrupt his mission."

Saying this, he sought immediate permission of Ram for dispatching Lakshman without any loss of time with select group of monkeys.

#### **6-85 Lakshaman at *nikumbhila* temple (36/ 3804)**

Ram was so much immersed in sorrow that he couldn't hear Vibhishan's words properly. He asked him to repeat his words. As desired Vibhishan repeated his view point, "It was all a diverting trick of Indrajeet because he must have been trying to complete the oblations in the *nikumbhila* temple."

Vibhishan further revealed, "Indrajeet has been gifted by Brahma one potent *brahmshir* weapon, and swift horses. Brahma had also mentioned that while offering oblation in *nikumbhila* temple, if your oblation is interrupted by some body he will be your killer. In order to interrupt his mission Lakshaman has to move there with his army. He must have been performing his *ygya* surrounded by strong demons' army." Vibhishan also mentioned, "This would help bring Lakshaman to bring about the end of his life today."

Ram agreed to his proposal and advised Lakshaman to be alert and eliminate the demon. He also advised Vibhishan to accompany Lakshaman in addition to monkey army.

Lakshaman offered his respect in the feet of Ram and moved to Nikumbhila temple. Accompanied by Hanuman, Sugriva, Vibhishan and other monkeys, he arrived at the destination in time.

**6-86 Operation *nikumbhila* (35 / 3839)**

Coming close to *nikumbhila*, Vibhishan pointed out to Lakshaman, “Look at the cloud like cordoing of *nikumbhila*. This is the army of demons, and this has to be cleared before you reach Indrajeet inside offering oblations.” Soon the monkeys swooped over the demons. Fierce fighting took place. When Indrajeet learnt about attack of monkeys, leaving his mission inconclusive, he rode the chariot and moved out to face the monkeys. Hanuman in the meanwhile was engaged in causing great casualty to the demons army. To contain Hanuman’s spree, Indrajeet arrived near him. When he was there, Vibhishan pointed out to Lakshaman about the presence of Indrajeet in the chariot. Lakshaman took a look at the demon sitting in the chariot.

**6-87 Cordoning of the banyan tree (30 / 3869)**

Soon Vibhishan piloted Lakshaman through a dense forest, and they arrived at a large banyan tree. Vibhishan pointed out, “Indrajeet offers his daily oblation here before leaving for battle ground. Before he comes here, you have to initiate your attack and kill him.”

Lakshaman was ready with his bow, and stretching the string he produced terrible sound. In the meanwhile Indrajeet arrived there. Lakshaman challenged him for combat. Before he responded, looking towards Vibhishan he spoke, “You have been born and brought up in the royal palace. You are my uncle, but I am surprised to see how you turned treacherous to us. Leaving the loyalty to Lanka, you have become a doll in the hand of the enemy. Your this act shall always be condemned. Only close family members knew about this place, and it is you who have brought Lakshaman here.”

Vibhishan replied him, “Although I am born in a demon’s house I didn’t carry the sinful impressions of the demons. I did never indulge in immoral deeds. Your father has abducted other’s wife, and it is a great sin. To grab other’s wealth, wife and doubt over one’s own kith and kin are thee great sins. You are known for your impudence. Today you won’t be able to access the banyan tree and shall be soon killed. Lanka, your father and you shall be eliminated, there is no doubt in it.”

**6-88 Lakshaman fought Indrajeet (77 / 3946)**

Looking towards Lakshaman, Indrajeet spoke, “It seems you have forgotton the injury of my arrows. To day I would soon dispatch you to the death world.” Lakshaman replied, “Its no use prattling. You are a treacherous, and the other day you ran away from the ground. Let us see the current situation, and I invite you to use all your skills on me.”

Indrajeet showered sharp shafts over Lakshaman who was riding over the shoulder of Hanuman. Lakshaman countered his arrows and shot several arrows over him. Both used deadly shafts on each other. Indrajeet caused injury to Vibhishan, Lakshaman, and Hanuman, but Lakshaman was not disturbed at all. Lakshaman charged an arrow which

broke shield of Indrajeet. Thereafter, Lakshaman's further shafts caused grievous injury over his body.

#### **6-89 Indrajeet lost charioteer and horses (53 / 3999)**

The fighting had culminated to such an extent that Vibhishan couldn't restrain himself, and taking a bow and arrows, he also commenced fighting with the demons. He shot several deadly arrows over the demons causing several casualties. At the same time, he exhorted the monkeys, "Don't miss this golden chance. Scores of eminent demons have already been killed. Indrajeet is the only twinkling star of Ravan's reserve force. You have to be offensive in eliminating the balance army assisting him here. He is son of my brother, and therefore is my son. Whenever I pick up an arrow to charge over him, tears well up in my eyes. Therefore, he is at the disposal of Lakshaman only."

Hearing Vibhishan, monkeys renewed their attack over demons. Hanuman also dropped down Lakshaman over ground and joined the killing spree of demons army.

While Indrajeet and Lakshaman continued their fight, the multitude of arrows covered the entire sky to horizon. There was no light, sun was not visible. Wind went still, and fire lost the ignition. Sages were worried about the earth and wished wellbeings of the all the beings. Lakshaman using four sharp arrows injured the horses of Indrajeet, and with another shaft killed the charioteer. Indrajeet himself took the reign of the chariot, and continued fighting. When he held reign, Lakshaman targeted his hands and injured them. When he engaged his hands on bow and arrows, Lakshaman continued causing injury to the horses. It was an exciting scene, and four monkeys Pramathi, Sharabh, Rabhas, and Gandhamadan taking advantage of the constraint of Indrajeet, jumped over the horses. Under their heavy weight, the horses fell down and collapsed. Those monkeys swiftly and safely quit the place.

Indrajeet was without chariot, and he came down over ground. He rushed on foot to Lakshaman showering arrows over him. Lakshaman continuing countering his arrows, caused grievous injuries over his body.

#### **6-90 Indrajeet eliminated (94 / 4093)**

Indrajeet, losing his chariot felt great constraint in warfare. In the meanwhile, he encouraged his fellow demons to continue fierce fighting, and create a magical situation to allow him to escape and comeback with a new chariot. While demons kept the enemy engaged, Indrajeet retuned back riding a new chariot. Coming back, he caused great casualties of monkeys.

Lakshaman observed the sense of panic over the face of monkeys. He very swiftly cut down the bow of Indrajeet. When he picked up another bow, Lakshaman shooting three arrows again cut down that bow also. Lakshaman shot five deadly shafts over his chest and caused him to vomit blood. He again picked up a new bow of strong string, and showered arrows over Lakshaman. All his arrows were easily countered by Lakshaman.

With one arrow to each demon, Lakshaman hit them grievously. Finding opportunity, Lakshaman killed the charioteer of Indrajeet. It was strange to notice that in absence of the charioteer, the horses maintained their faultless movement. Lakshaman taking target of the horses, continued injuring them. Indrajeet shot ten deadly arrows over the chest of Lakshaman, but due to impregnable shield Lakshaman was fully safe. Noticing that, Indrajeet shot three shafts over his forehead. Bearing with his assault, Lakshaman shot five arrows to injure his face and ears.

Indrajeet injured the face of Vibhishan by three arrows, and he also injured all the monkeys by shooting one arrow to each of them. Vibhishan was angry and taking his mace he killed the horses of Indrajeet. In absence of charioteer and horses, Indrajeet joined the fight on foot. He charged trident over Vibhishan, but Lakshaman cut that into pieces. Vibhishan used his bow, and shot five heavy shafts over chest of Indrajeet which caused grievous injury to him. Enraged Indrajeet, loaded *Yam* shaft over the string having target on Vibhishan.

Lakshaman immediately countered that, using a shaft as he had instructions by *kuber* in a dream. Lakshaman shot *varun astr* which was countered by Indrajeet by *Rudr astr*. The *agni astr* of Indrajeet was countered by *surya astr* of Lakshaman. Indrajeet in retaliation shot *asur astr* which produced innumerable deadly tridents, clubs, and maces. Lakshaman countered that with *maheswar astr*.

The sky was occupied by sages and other celestial beings to watch the deadly and fierce fighting between Lakshaman and Indrajeet. Lakshaman took out a brilliant shaft and loading over the string invoked his potential, "Ram has no parallel in righteousness, O, shaft! Go and kill Indrajeet now."

The fire like shaft hit the demon, and severed his head off the body. Indrajeet was dead and his bow fell apart.

This was a moment of great joy among monkeys. The remaining demons deserted the ground searching their hiding place inside Lanka. The celestial beings and sages rejoiced the end of Indrajeet. Gods produced sweet sound from the celestial trumpets. With the end of Indrajeet, auspiciousness dawned over earth. The sky became clear, cool wind permeated the environment. Monkeys rushed to Ram and informed him about the end of Indrajeet.

### 6-91 Rejoicing of monkeys (29 / 4122)

After killing Indrajeet, Lakshaman rushed to meet Hanuman and Jambavan. They immediately moved to Ram amidst joyous uproar of the monkeys. While moving, Lakshaman was flanked by Hanuman and Vibhishan. Coming to Ram, Lakshaman bowed his head over Ram's feet and stood on his side as if Upendra (*vaman bhagwan*) had stood by Indr (6-91-4). Vibhishan spoke to Ram, "Lakshaman has killed Indrajeet by cutting asunder his head." Elated Ram dragged Lakshaman in his lap, and smelling his

head with affection, he continued looking at his face. He mentioned, “End of Indrajeet means end of battle.”

Lakshaman had grievous wounds over his body. The arrows were lying stabbed and they caused pain. Ram sent for Sushen (one of the chiefs of the monkeys **6-91-24**) and asked him to treat Lakshaman, Vibhishan and others who suffered from the stabbed arrows. Through the consistent efforts of **three days and nights (6-91-16)** of Vibhishan, Hanuman and others Indrajeet could be killed.

Sushen gave a medicinal drop in the nose of Lakshaman, and its fragrance caused the automatic surfacing of the arrows by self healing of the wounds. Similar treatment was done to all who had suffered from stabs of arrows.

### **6-92 Sorrowful Ravan (68 / 4190)**

The ministers of Ravan, before breaking the news personally visited the ground and confirmed the end of Indrajeet. Coming to Ravan they mentioned, “With the assistance of Vibhishan, Lakshaman has ended the life of Indrajeet.”

Ravan was extremely grieved with the news of end of Indrajeet. He had a long spell of fit and on recovery he wailed loudly, “O, Indrajeet! You had prevailed upon Indr, how did you fall prey to Lakshaman? In your absence the sages and celestial beings shall relax in slumber. The entire earth looks deserted to me. The thorn of my chest, Ram, Lakshaman and Sugriv are still alive. Why did you quit me so early? I should have preceded you in death, but the reverse has happened.”

Lamenting thus it occurred to him, “Indrajeet had killed fake Sita over battle ground. Let me make it real.” He rushed with a sword in his hand to kill Sita. His ministers persuaded him to desist from such an act but he didn’t listen and arrived in *ashok vatika*.

Sita was scared to see him coming. She thought, “He is coming to kill me. Could be he is coming to convey that Ram and Lakshaman had been killed. If the latter is true, how unfortunate I am! What shall happen to Kausalya whose only son is killed because of me. Curse to Manthra ! Because of her, Kausalya shall have to bear news of end of her son.”

In the meanwhile, Suparshv, dared to intervene, and spoke to Ravan, “You had maintained celibacy, attained the knowledge of *veda*, and ruled efficiently over earth. To kill a woman is a condemnable sin. You should take revenge from Ram and possess her after killing him. Today is 14<sup>th</sup> day of the dark fortnight (**6-92-66**), and tomorrow, on *amavasya* day, move for the victory over Ram.”

Good sense prevailed upon Ravan, and he returned back to the palace.

### 6-93 Ram killed demons army (39 / 4229)

Agitated Ravan asked his ministers, "Let entire army be sent to battle ground today with the sole intention to kill Ram. Go and collectively surround Ram from all sides. Eliminate him today itself. If he survives today's attack I would kill him tomorrow."

As commanded by Ravan the entire army of demons stormed over the battle ground. They were riding horses, elephants, and chariots. Beside, large contingent of infantry had also been engaged in fighting. They were equipped with all sorts of weapons including tridents, spears, swords, clubs, maces, bows and arrows.

Monkeys were equally excited and took them boldly. Hurling of rocks and trees, wielding of swords, spears, flying arrows marked the sky over the battle ground. The casualties were so high that full depth streams and rivers of blood were formed. Like wooden logs the corpses were carried in the blood stream. The wreckage of elephants and chariots made the banks, the arrows looked like fish, and fallen flags were trees of the banks.

Demons were so barbarous that some monkeys took refuge to Ram. Interfering in the fierce fighting Ram used *gandharv astr* (6-93-26). Hypnotizing the demons, Ram's arrows were seen all pervading. Monkeys looked like Ram to the demons. At times Ram was seen alone, and in the following moment, he was seen with his arrows at all places. He was not identified at a single location, but his arrows were present at all places.

Ram's potential had such a charismatic effect that the ends of his bow were observed to be rotating so fast that gave an impression of a moving disc. In fact he himself had rotated in all quarters so swiftly that he looked like a rotating disc lying in a vertical plane. The disc rotated about a horizontal axis passing through the navel of his body. The formation of the disc could be described thus: his navel was the centre of the disc, arrows were spokes, bow formed the outer circle, the resonance of the bow string was the sound of the disc, and shooting swiftness formed the brilliance of *Ram Chaki*<sup>37</sup> ((6-93-29 / 30).

In this way, in only one eighth period of the day, he dealt firmly with the entire demons army. He destroyed (6-93-26) ten thousand chariots, eighteen thousand elephants, fourteen thousand horses, and two hundred thousand infantry.

For such a miraculous performance, he was highly greeted by the celestial beings. He also mentioned to Sugriv, Vibhishan, Hanuman, Jambvan, Dwvid and Maind who were standing on his sides that such a divine power was either inherent with him or with *shiv* in-charge of destruction (6-93-38 एतदस्त्रबलं दिव्यं मम वा त्र्यम्बकस्य वा ).

<sup>37</sup> शरीरं नाभिः सत्त्वार्चिः शरारं नेमिकामुकम् । ज्याघोषतलनिर्घोषं तेजोबुद्धिगुणप्रभम् ॥ 6-93-29

दिव्यास्त्रगुणपर्यन्तं निघ्नन्तं युधिराक्षसान् । ददृशू रामचक्रं तत् कालचक्रमिव प्रजा ॥ 6-93-30



### 6-94 Wailing demonesses condemned *Shurpanakha* (41 / 4270)

The demonesses of Lanka mourned the killing of their kith and kin. Lamenting loudly they mentioned, "The root cause is Surpanakha, the wretched and devil woman. Being ugly and dreadful, how did she dare to solicit relation with handsome and charming Ram and his brother Lakshaman! Ram's potential was well confirmed by elimination of Viradh who wanted to grab Sita. Further, he cleared fourteen thousand demons, and their captains Khar, Dushan and Trishira from Janasthan. Mighty Kabandh was made armless. Terribly strong Vali was killed in one shot. Sugriv had been crowned king of Kishkindha only because of him. Kumbhakarn, Atikaya, and Indrajeet have been eliminated. Fortunate is Vibhishan that he sought refuge in Ram."

Condemning ego of Ravan, they narrated, "Pleased by his penance Brahma had blessed him immunity against demons, gods and celestial beings. Overwhelmed by his ego, he ignored humans (6-94-29) and didn't seek immunity against them. Ram is manifestation of supreme authority to bring about his end. When gods were persecuted by Ravan, they approached Brahma, and he assured them, "Demons shall live with great fear of their destruction." Shiv also predicted to gods, "One woman would cause end of the entire demons. (6-94-36) "

They lamented, "We see the things coming true today. We can't find any refuge now."

### 6-95 Ravan on battle ground (54 / 4324)

Ravan heard the loud lamentation of demonesses. He pondered over their words and commanded, "Ask Mahodar<sup>38</sup>, Mahaparshv, and Virupaksh to prepare for my departure to the battle ground." Soon the preparations were made by calling the demons from each house of Lanka to accompany Ravan on battle ground. Over one hundred thousand chariots, three hundred thousand elephants, sixty hundred thousand horses, same number of camels and asses, and innumerable infantry gathered near the royal palace (6-95-28). Ravan moved out riding a sun like brilliant chariot pulled by eight horses.

On his command Mahodar, Mahaparshv, and Virupaksh followed him riding their separate chariots. The movement of the army was greeted by tumultuous sound of trumpets. The earth trembled imagining the extent of imminent holocaust.

Ravan came out of Lanka, using the same gate on which Ram and Lakshaman had pitched their camp. His movement was marked by bad omens: stormy wind, stumbling horses, darkness around, terrifying noise of the birds and jackals, blood mixed rain, perching vulture over flag mast, falling meteorites, defening thunders, pulsating left eye and left arm.

<sup>38</sup> Mahodar and Mahaparshv of this *sarg* are ministers in the royal court of Ravan (ref. 6-99-3), whereas those referred in *sarg* 70 were step brothers of Ravan.

Ignoring the forebodings, he marched ahead and caused great havoc among the monkey armies.

#### **6-96 Sugriv killed Virupaksh (36 / 4360)**

Ravan caused great destruction of monkeys. Finding hardly any resistance, he moved towards Ram. Sugriv noticed huge loss of monkeys and he rushed forward to contain the demons. He was followed by other monkey chiefs. He began heavy pouring of rocks and trees which caused end of scores of demons. Soon he was checked by Virupaksh, who leaving his chariot, mounted an elephant.

Sugriv dashed a tree over the elephant which fell over knees. Virupaksh holding a sword jumped over Sugriv. When Sugriv hurled a rock, he ducked that easily. Moving forward again, he injured Sugriv who fell in swoon. Recovering soon, he leapt with a tree over him, but he escaped the attack, and broke the shield of Sugriv with his sharp sword. When Sugriv pounded his fist over him, he again ducked and saved himself. Finding a chance, he injured the legs of Sugriv. A little agitated, but soon Sugriv picked up his spirit, and punched over his forehead. The demon fell over ground and vomited blood. His eyes dilated dreadfully, and he was dead. Monkeys rejoiced the killing, where as demons mourned for Virupaksh.

#### **6-97 Sugriv killed Mahodar (38 / 4398)**

Ravan was shocked to lose Virupaksh. Addressing Mahodar, he mentioned, "I pin my great hope upon you. You can turn the scene in our favour." Accepting the challenge, Mahodar joined the fighting with renewed spirit and caused untold misery over monkeys. They ran to Sugriv for protection.

Sugriv soon rushed to Mahodar who was riding a chariot and shooting swift arrows. The rocks and trees hurled by Sugriv were easily countered by him. Sugriv found a club lying over the ground, and using that club he killed the horses of the chariot. The demon jumped with mace in his hand. When both the warriors charged their weapons on each other, the weapons were destroyed midway by collision. Both were without weapon, and they were engaged in wrestling. That also proved indecisive, and Mahodar picked up a sword. Sugriv also happened to locate a sword lying over ground. Both used their superb skill to tilt the scale in one's favour. While Mahodar charged his sword over Sugriv's shield, and he was trying to pull the sword for second charge, Sugriv got a chance to cut asunder his head off the body. Mahodar was dead, and that caused great shock as well as wrath to Ravan.

The killing of Mahodar was celebrated by celestials also who watched the battle from sky.

### 6-98 Angad killed Mahaparshv (26 / 4424)

When Mahaparshv learnt about the death of Mahodar, he lost his balance in anger. Riding a large chariot, he showered sharp arrows over monkeys army assisting Angad, and caused heavy casualty. Angad moved forward and hurled a heavy club over him. The impact of club, brought down the demon along with his charioteer over the ground. Jambvan from the nearby picked up a rock mass and crushed his chariot along with the horses.

Coming on foot, the demon showered arrows and injured Angad, Jambvan and Gavaksh. Furious Angad picked up a club, and charging heavily over him broke his bow and crown together. The demon picked up a bright axe and pounded over left shoulder of Angad. Ducking his charge, Angad punched his clenched fist over his chest. His chest was torn apart and that caused the end of Mahaparshv. Monkeys rejoiced the killing, while demons were extremely shocked.

### 6-99 Ram and Ravan in combat (51 / 4475)

Ravan spoke to the charioteer, "My ministers Virupaksh, Mahodar, and Mahaparshv have been killed. I will not now allow Ram and Lakshaman to live longer. Take me forward."

He drew a picture of *Ramvruksh* (6-99- 04 / 05), which he was pledged to destroy completely, "I will destroy this great tree, called Ram Tree. This tree has branches of Sugriv, Jambvan, kumud, Nal, Dwvid, Maing, Angad, Gandhamadan, Hanuman, Sushen and other monkeys. Sita is the flower who causes this tree to bear fruits."

When his chariot picked up speed while moving towards Ram, it produced deafening sound. Soon he charged *tamas astr* causing loss of lives of scores monkeys. This shaft was the gift of Brahma to Ravan, and monkeys were not able to face this. They took to their heels.

Ram and Lakshaman stood stable and were happy to see him coming towards them. Ram produced great resonating sound from the string of his bow, which intensified with the sound of arrows of Ravan, caused great havoc among demon armies.

Lakshaman picked up the chance first, and showered arrows over Ravan. He countered them, and proceeding to Ram, showered arrows over him. The sky was filled with arrows flying with wings of vultures. While Ram countered them with spear like arrows, he shot *narach* (shafts of annular tips) perching around forehead of Ram in a circular order. Undisturbed by *narach*, Ram shot *raudr astr* over him which hit his shield. Further, Ram injured his forehead by one of terrible arrows.

The enraged demon, retaliated by charging *asur astr* producing arrows having dreadful tips of meat loving animals and birds, i.e., lions, tigers, dogs, wolves, ass, jackals, crows, hawks, vultures, snakes etc. Ram countered them by invoking *agni astr* producing fire,

sun, moon, crescent moon, comet, meteorites, and lightning. Monkeys rejoiced the countering of deadly weapons of the demon by Ram and produced sky renting uproars.

### 6-100 Lakshaman hit to unconsciousness (62 / 4537)

Finding futility of his deadly shafts, Ravan invoked a shaft made by *mayasur* demon. This showered varieties of lethal weapons i.e., swords, tridents, maces, pestles etc. over the monkeys. Ram countered them by *gandharv astr*. The demon renewed his attack by charging *surya astr* which produced sharp discs causing casualty to monkeys. Ram cut them into pieces and brought relief to the monkeys.

Ravan shot ten sharp arrows causing injury to Ram's body. Ram was not agitated, and he injured the demon's body severely by shooting several arrows. In the meanwhile, Lakshaman interfered with seven sharp arrows. One of them cut down the flag of the demon's chariot marked with the sign of skull (6-100-14). The second one killed the charioteer, and the rest five cut his mighty bow into pieces. Lakshaman was assisted by Vibhishan, who used his mace to kill the horses of his chariot.

Ravan jumping down over ground, charged a radiant *shakti* over Vibhishan. This was countered midway by Lakshaman, well before it could reach Vibhishan. The shakti decorated with a gold chain, fell into three pieces over ground. The monkeys rejoiced the feat of Lakshaman by producing shrieking sounds.

Ravan targeting over Vibhishan, picked up another deadly *shakti*. Seeing terrifying fire emitted from the weapon while it was in the hand of the demon, Lakshaman came forward shadowing Vibhishan in the background. Lakshaman resumed showering arrows over him. Ravan spoke loudly, "Lakshaman, shadowing Vibhishan behind, you have saved him, but now I shall end your life." He hurled that *shakti* over Lakshaman, and produced a terrifying sound. The swift *shakti* coming on lightning speed, pierced deep into Lakshaman's chest. Ram, sensing the grievousness of the weapon, earnestly wished a safe life to Lakshaman. Ram was in deep sorrow, when he saw Lakshaman flat over ground.

"It is time to retaliate, rather than lament", thinking this Ram asked Hanuman and Sugriva to protect Lakshaman from all sides. Lakshaman was lying in pool of blood, and the monkeys tried in vain to take out the weapon from his chest.

With stable mind, while Ram took out the weapon from Lakshaman's chest, the demon continued showering arrows over Ram causing injuries to his body. Taking out the weapon from the chest of Lakshaman, Ram broke that into two pieces.

Undaunted by the critical state of Lakshaman, Ram picked up his fight with the demon, and shot several infallible shafts to injure him grievously. Ravan was on foot, and felt great constraint in his movement. He was also scared by Ram's terrible charges, and taking to his heels, he rushed back to the city of Lanka.

**6-101 Lakshaman revived (56 / 4593)**

While Ram resumed his charges over Ravan, he asked Sushen to initiate treatment of Lakshaman at the earliest. Sushen advised Hanuman to bring the herbs used earlier as directed by Jambvan, "You are aware of the four varieties of herbs lying over the southern end of the Mahodar mountain."

Sushen mentioned to Ram, "I notice sign of conscious spirit in Lakshaman's body. His face is fresh, and pulse is active. Lakshaman is bound to revive once the medicines are procured."

As advised, Hanuman immediately rushed to the destination. Arriving at the specified mountain he was not able to identify those medicines, and he preferred to take out the mountain itself. Giving three jerks, he uprooted the mountain, and moved fast to Lanka.

When Ravan ran away, Ram coming close to Lakshaman, and taking him in his lap lamented loudly, "You can't leave me alone. As you had followed me in forest, I would follow you in the death world. What happened to your earnest desire to keep advising me time and again? Get up, and see my pitiable state. I won't fight any more. What is the use of fighting? One can find other wife, cousins, but one can't find own brother anywhere on this earth (6-101-15)."

In the meanwhile, Hanuman arrived with the mountain carrying the life saving herbs. Sushen picked up the herbs and ground them before use. Once the medicine was put in the nostril of Lakshaman, he got up fully fresh, and arrows stabbed in his body automatically fell off his body.

Ram, drawing Lakshaman, embraced him affectionately within his arms and mentioned, "I can't survive your separation. I am fortunate to see you alive. In your absence, getting back Sita, and victory were meaningless."

Lakshaman quipped back, "How can you lose the main objective of honouring your words to Vibhishan for crowing him as king of Lanka? The devil Ravan has to be immediately eliminated by your sharp arrows. My only desire is to see him dead today only before sun sets in the west."

**6-102 Ram over celestial chariot (70 / 4663)**

To fulfil Lakshaman's earnest wish, Ram looked towards the battle ground, and loaded his bow with arrow. In the meanwhile, Ravan appeared riding a new chariot. While arriving close to Ram, he looked like *rahu* rushing towards sun. Soon, he commenced showering arrows over Ram.

While Ram countered the demon's arrows, gods got anxiety about his remaining on foot. Hearing gods, *Indr* immediately dispatched his chariot driven by Matali to Ram. Arriving over battle ground, while seated over chariot, with folded hands Matali spoke to Ram,

“As desired by Indr, this chariot is meant for you. Kindly accept this gesture, and oblige gods. This will facilitate early victory over the demon. The chariot, being pulled by green horses, looks like the rising sun. Here lies the mighty bow, brilliant shield, infallible arrows, and potent *shakti* of *Indr*.”

Ram, gladly mounted the chariot and commenced his attack over the demon. They were engaged in fierce fighting. Ravan invoking lethal weapons, continued assaults over Ram. It appeared as if *Budh* (बुध mercury) had become inimical to *rohini* रोहिणी, the beloved star of moon (6-102-31), and mars (मंगल) had afflicted favourite *vishakha* (विशाखा) stars of Ikshavaku dynasty (6-102-35). Ravan appeared to have an edge over Ram. Under the swift attack of Ravan, Ram was not able to find time to be aggressive. He cut down the flag over Ram’s chariot, and injured Matali as well as the horses. Gods and celestial beings were down with anxiety.

Picking up a potent spear, Ravan charged over Ram, and mentioned, “This will bring about your instant end.” Ram noticed the brilliant and deadly weapon speeding towards him. He tried his arrows but they failed to counter the demon’s spear. Soon Ram picked up Indr’s *shakti* lying in the chariot, and the demon’s spear was countered successfully. Continuing his assault with arrows, Ram injured his chest as well forehead. He got agitated, and expressed his wrath through his broad eyes.

#### 6-103 Ravan driven out safely (31 / 4694)

Ravan resumed the showering of arrows and injured Ram badly. Although Ram was injured, he was not agitated. He maintained his spirited attack over the demon. It was such a gloomy combat, that the arrows had covered the sky stealing away the light from the battle ground.

Ram rebuked Ravan, “Fool! Coward! In my absence you abducted Sita and assume yourself very valorous. Had I been present, you would have gone to the abode of your brother Khar. Fortunately today you are here to face me, and I would see that vultures would soon feast upon your body.”

Subsequently auspicious signs appearing to Ram indicated happy moments ahead. Ram’s hands were automatically picking up potent arrows and continued shooting over the demon. Ravan was puzzled, and with drooped face he was not able to fire the fresh shots. He was motionless in the chariot. His charioteer sensed the critical situation and very skilfully and safely, drove him away.

#### 6-104 Ravan back to the battle ground (27 / 4721)

When Ravan noticed being taken away by his charioteer from the battle ground, he burst out, “You have defamed me by taking my chariot away from the fighting front. Without learning about my intention, how did you decided to quit the front. I suspect your loyalty, and it seems you have become an agent of my enemy. You have worked like an enemy. I wonder how did you turn ungrateful to me.”

The charioteer in sweet words convinced Ravan, “A charioteer has a great responsibility. He needs to be alert on time and place of fighting. Neither I am an agent of Ram, nor your enemy, nor have I become ungrateful. When I noticed sign of tiredness on you, and the horses were also stumbling, I withdrew to revive the freshness. I am clear in my intentions. I await your command now.”

Ravan was satisfied with his answer, and he rewarded the charioteer with a precious gift of his armlet. He asked him to take his chariot to the front immediately, and he was immediately brought to face Ram.

### 6-105 *Adityahrudaya* आदित्यहृदय (31 / 4752)

While Ram stood on the battle ground, and Ravan’s chariot was about to approach, sage Agastya appeared and spoke to Ram, “I advise you to invoke the blessings of sun god by reciting his glory. This is contained in the holy scripture called *adityahrudaya* आदित्यहृदय .

This augurs auspiciousness and brings about victory. Sun god is ever powerful, enlightens the world, and invariably rises every day.

You offer your respect to him by reciting *mantr*:

रश्मिमते नमः ।

समुद्यते नमः ।

देवासुर नमस्कृताय नमः ।

विवस्वते नमः ।

भास्कराय नमः ।

All the gods are his manifestation. He maintains the brilliance and energy among all the creatures of the world. His rays provide nourishment to the entire world, and he causes the occurrence of seasons.

He is known by several names and let there be reverential salute to all of them:

*aditya* (आदित्य son of *aditi*),  
*savita* (सविता creator of universe),  
*surya* (सूर्य all pervading),  
*khag* (खग wanderer of sky),  
*pusha* (पूषा provider of nourishment),  
*gavastiman* (गभस्तिमान् brilliant),  
*suvarn sadrush* (सुवर्णसदृश golden),  
*bhanu* (भानु provider of light),  
*hirany reta* (हिरण्यरेता seed of creation),  
*divakar* (दिवाकर ending night’s darkness creator of day’s light ),  
*haridashva* (हरिदश्वा all pervading carried by green horses),

*sahasrarchi* (सहस्रार्चि has thousands of rays),  
*sapt sapti* (सप्तसप्ति carried by seven horses ),  
*marichiman* (मरीचिमान् enhanced by rays),  
*timironmathan* (तिमिरोन्मथन destroyer of darkness),  
*shambhu* (शंभु genesis of auspiciousness ),  
*twasta* (त्वष्टा destroyer of afflictions, or destroyer of world),  
*martandak* (मार्तण्डक life provider to world),  
*anshuman* (अंशुमान possessor of rays ),  
*hirnyagarbh* (हिरण्यगर्भ *brahma*, one who conceives gold),  
*shishir* (शिशिर natural comforter),  
*tapan* (तपन heat generator ),  
*ahaskar* (अहस्कर sun),  
*ravi* (रवि subject of solicitation),  
*agnigarbh* (अग्निगर्भ one who conceives fire ),  
*aditiputr* (अदितिपुत्र son of *aditi*),  
*shankh* (शंख blissful and all pervading),  
*shishimashan* (शिशिरनाशन destroyer of cold),  
*vyomnath* (व्योमनाथ master of sky ),  
*tamobhedhi* (तमोभेदी destroyer of darkness),  
*rig yaju sam parag* (ऋग् यजुः सामपारगः knower of ved),  
*ghanvrishti* (घनवृष्टि cause of downpour),  
*apanmitr* (अपामित्र one who creates water),  
*vindhya vithi plavangam* (विन्ध्यवीथीप्लवंगम sky wanderer),  
*atapi* (आतपी generator of heat),  
*mandali* (मंडली holder of rays garland),  
*mrutyu* (मृत्यु cause of death ),  
*pingal* (पिंगल yellowish hues),  
*sarvtapan* (सर्वतापन heater to all),  
*kavi* (कवि knower of time),  
*viswa* (विश्व uiversal),  
*mahatejasvi* (महातेजस्वी most brilliant ),  
*rakt* (रक्त red hues),  
*sarvavodava* (सर्वभवोद्भव genesis of all),  
*naksharagrahamtaranamadhip* (नक्षत्रग्रहतारणामधिप master of stars),  
*tejsamapi tejaswi* (तेजसामपि तेजस्वी most radiant),  
*dwadsatma* (द्वादशात्मा manifest in twelve forms ).

Bow down to *purvgiri* (पूर्वगिरि) east rising, and *pashchimgiri* (पश्चिम गिरि) setting west. Bow down to the master of stars, and lord of the day.



You are victory itself, and provider of victory. You are carried by seven green horses, I bow down time again. You are adorned with thousands of rays, bow down to you time and again. You are son of *aditi*, bow down to you.

Destroyer of sinner, valorous and swift mover, causes blossoming of lotus, bow down to you.

You are master of *brahma*, *shiv*, and *Vishnu*. You are known as *sur*, radiance is your wealth, you are full of light, fire is your manifestation, you are capable of destruction to all. You assume *rudra* form. I bow down to you.

You are destroyer of ignorance and darkness, you destroy inertia and cold, you are destroyer of enemy, you are beyond measure, you are destroyer of those who are ungrateful, you are master of all sorts of light, and you are divine. I bow down to you.

Your radiance is like molten gold. You destroy ignorance, you create world, destroyer of darkness, direct manifestation of light, and witness to world. I bow down to you.

Agastya further emphasised, "Sun is creator, protector and destroyer of all the beings. His rays cause heat and rain. He is all pervading, and is ever awake even if others sleep, and is culmination of all fire oblations. He is god of sacrifices, and provider of rewards. One who chants his glory, his misery, and fear are eliminated. You should concentrate on chanting of his glory. Repeat it three times. Victory will be yours. You will kill Ravana now."

Saying thus, Agastya disappeared. Ram performed the ritual of cleaning hands, feet and mouth, and chanted the glory three times facing towards sun. He became fearless and bold.

Sun god was present among gods in sky. He gladly assured Ram, "Do it forthwith. Victory to you."

### 6-106 Forebodings on battle ground (36 / 4788)

The charioteer of Ravana drove the chariot very fast which was full of all the lethal weapons. The black horses were pulling it. The chariot was shining like sun. Horses had been decorated with golden chains. Flags and festoons enhanced the beauty of the chariot. The bow in the hand of Ravana was attractive like a rainbow.

When Ram saw the chariot coming close to him, he spoke to Matali, "You are expert in chariot driving. You need to drive very fast as you had been doing with *Indra*. I want to concentrate to kill this demon now, therefore I won't be giving you any instruction." He also advised Matali not to take his advice as a teaching, rather it was meant to prepare him for sharing his self assumed responsibility.

Matali drove the chariot keeping Ravana's chariot on right. The movement of the chariot created so much of dust that Ravana got annoyed and he began showering arrows over Ram.

Soon there appeared numerous bad omens indicating end of Ravana, "Wherever Ravana's chariot moved, it faced harsh and reverse wind. Vultures kept hovering over his chariot. Jackals wailed staring in the face of Ravana. Blood drops precipitated over his chariot.

Meteorites fell over his army. Sun looked pale. Lanka gave an impression of an ignited city. Clamouring birds fell over his chariot. Horses wept and their thighs flashed with fire.

Ravan ignored the forebodings and continued his attack. Contrary to this, Ram felt excited and spirited and was confident of victory.

### 6-107 Fierce fighting of Ram and Ravan (67 / 4855)

When both Ram and Ravan faced each other on the fighting front, army of both the sides remained a mute spectator. The combat was so captivating that neither demons used any of their weapons, nor monkeys hurled any rock and tree missile. They riveted their gaze on the fighting heroes. Ram and Ravan were determined over their objective, "Ram was confident of victory, and Ravan was sure of his end (6-107-07 जेतव्यमिति काकुत्स्थो मर्तव्यमिति रावणः )

Ravan tried to cut down the flag from Ram's chariot, but his arrow fell short of the destination. His assault over Matali didn't cause any injury to him. Taking retaliatory initiatives, Ram cut down the Ravan's flag. Ram used the bow and arrows of *Indr* which were brought in the chariot by Matali (6-106-17).

The celestial horses pulled Ram's chariot, and therefore, none of Ravan's arrow could cause any harm to them.

The arrows of Ram and Ravan covered the entire sky. Hardly any space was visible without any arrow.

At one point of time, Ram caused Ravan's horses to backtrack several steps which enraged Ravan. He charged lethal arrows over Matiali but he remained unscathed. Ram taking the opportunity, filled Ravan's chariot with arrows. In retaliation, Ravan shot maces and pestles but Ram countered them.

Ram used a potential arrow which cut down the head of Ravan, but soon another head cropped up. Ram repeated this operation hundred times, but each time Ravan got new a new head. Ram had an anxiety of killing him, for he used all the arrows used earlier to kill *Khar* and *Vali* but none worked over Ravan.

### 6-108 End of Ravan (34 / 4889)

Matali politely submitted to Ram, "The time of Ravan's end has arrived. Instead of only countering his attack, you need to invoke the infallible weapon of Brahma."

Ram was reminded of the possession of a bow which he had received from sage Agasty. Initially it was gifted by Brahma to *Indr*. The arrow was invested with the speed of wind, brilliance of fire and sun, body of sky, and gravity of *meru* and *mandarachal*. Ram loaded that arrow on the string and shot it targeting Ravan. The moment it left the bow of Ram, it created huge ecological disturbance. The deadly arrow drove deep in the Ravan's chest. Coming out blood soaked, it entered the earth, and then came back in the quiver of Ram.

Ravan was killed, and he fell down the chariot over ground. His crown and bow lied scattered around him. Gods, *gandharv* and celestial beings were overjoyed to see the end of the devil. They showered flower over Ram (6-108-28), and celestial trumpets

sounded sweet musical notes. The horizon was clear of dust. Pleasant, cool and fragrant breeze blew steadily.

Monkeys were uproarious with glory to Ram, and demons ran away to take shelter in Lanka. Sugriv, Vibhishan, Angad and Lakshaman greeted Ram with reverential offerings.

### **6-109 Wailing *Vibhishan* (25 / 4914)**

When Vibhishan saw the dead body of Ravan lying over ground he was seized by deep sorrow. His eyes were full of tears. He wailed and lamented loudly, "You always enjoyed royal luxuries, how you are lying over bare ground today! Alas! The misfortune arrived today. None from Prahast, Kumbhakarn, Indrajeet and you paid heed to my words. With your death sun has fallen over ground, moon has dipped deep in darkness, and flaming fire has faded out. The world is devoid of strength."

Vibhishan portrayed various pictures of his personality. Comparing him with a tree he mentioned, "You were like a tree having leaves of courage, flowers of obstinacy, stem of penance, and root of valour. This has been uprooted today by stormy wind like Ram."

Characterising him as elephant, he said, "Radiance was the tusks, heritage was the strong back, anger was the legs, and regal pleasure was the trunk. He is crushed today by lion like Ram."

Depicting him like fire, he spoke, "Excitement and splendour were flames, breath was smoke, and might was the brilliance. He is extinguished today by raining cloud like Ram."

Describing his bull like actions, he said, "Demon army was tail, hump and horns; he acted like wind in showing valour and courage; alertness was eyes and ears. He is killed today by a tiger like Ram."

Ram reminded Vibhishan, "He had attained the status worthy of a warrior. If a warrior sacrifices his life in fighting, it is not proper to lament for him. Victory is not a prisoner of one person. It keeps on tilting from one side to other. Today he is not dead, rather he has embraced the death boldly. He was never afraid of death. Don't lament anymore for such a great valour."

Vibhishan spoke again, "Earlier none of the demons, and gods could face him, but today he is lying over ground as if sea has become placid and motionless. He has gifted fabulously, enjoyed the royal luxuries, fed his attendants, favoured his friends and avenged with enemies. He offered oblations to fire, conducted sacrifices, performed penance and was knower of scriptures. Today his soul is wandering for transformation. I seek your permission to do his last rites."

Ram readily consented and advised Vibhishan to make all necessary arrangements for his immediate rites, "Enmity was when he was alive. Upon his death, that feeling is gone. Now his soul is affectionate to me also, as it is affectionate to you."

### 6-110 Wailing wives of Ravan (26 / 4940)

When the news of Ravan's end reached Lanka, his wives came out to the battle ground. They were tried to be held back but couldn't stop and rushed to the ground searching the corpse of Ravan. Passing through several dead bodies, they could identify the huge black body of the demon king Ravan.

Some of them, touched his body with respect, some fell over his arms, while others fell on ground in swoon. They lamented loudly, "You behaved so wilfully that didn't pay attention to anybody. Had you heeded to Vibhishan's advice, we would not have been made widow today. With your obstinacy, you destroyed the entire race."

### 6-111 Last rites of Ravan (124 / 5064)

Mandodari, the chief of the queens, was one among the wailing crowd of Ravan. She mentioned loudly, "When you used to be overwhelmed with anger, even Indr couldn't dare to face you. Today being humiliated by Ram, a human being, you are lying on ground, don't you feel ashamed of this? How did an ascetic kill the mighty conqueror of three worlds? I am sure Ram is not a human being. He is lord Vishnu Himself, the master of the entire universe. There is no beginning or end of Him. He is beyond all gods and beings, supreme spirit and transcendent to darkness of ignorance. He holds conch, disc, and mace. His chest is adorned with icon of *sri* (splendour) and *vatsa* (humility). Goddess Lakshmi always remains with Him (6-111-11 / 14). He has been assisted by gods disguised as monkeys. I was convinced about his divinity when I learnt about the end of Khar in Janasthan. Later event of Hanuman coming into Lanka which was out of bounds to gods, confirmed the superiority of Ram."

Describing about Sita Maondodari mentioned, "You longed for her for your self destruction only. She is a chaste lady superior to *rohini* (spouse of moon), and *arundhati* (consort of *Vashishath*). She is role model of tolerance superior to earth. Her grace and compassion is hallmark of goddess *Lakshmi*. Your passion for her has brought your end. I am surprised when you abducted her, how did you escape your end! Probably the balance of your penance would have saved you. I am sure Sita is not more beautiful than me, but her blind passion lead you to this state of destruction. Sita has huge balance of her righteousness that she will enjoy the association of her husband, but my balance is over and now I have been turned a widow. When Sita was brought in Lanka Vibhishan had predicted the end of Lanka."

Lamenting upon the prevailing condition, she said, "You never paid heed to the soft and respectful words of Vibhishan, Kumbhakarn, and Mareech. We were always taken out of royal place with due honor and protocol. Today we all have come on foot, and we hardly bothered about our wrappers. It is true that every event happens as destined. What shall I do here, in your absence? Why don't you take me with you on the same infinite path which you have preferred to traverse."

While royal women continued wailing, Ram advised Vibhishan to console the royal women and take care of the last rites. Vibhishan submitted to Ram, "I don't think I should perform the last rite of such a sinner who caused destruction of the entire demon race. The world will always condemn me for performing his last rites." Ram tried to reason with him, and convinced him to perform the last rites.

Vibhishan arranged the preparation of a royal carrier to take the body of Ravan to cremation ground. The carrier was fully decorated with royal provisions and sandal wood. The body of Ravan was laid in rest over a deer skin. Curd and ghee mixed pot was put on the south-east corner of his pyre. *Yajurvedi* Brahmins (6-111-110), following the practices of demons dynasty, performed the rituals, and they lead the pyre to the south of Lanka, while royal women followed the pyre, until they reached the cremation ground. Vibhishan lit the pyre, and on completion of the cremation, he took bath. With wet cloth, he offered oblation of *kush*, *til* (sesame) and water for the peace of the departed soul. Subsequently, he caused the royal women to return to the palace, and he himself came to Ram.

Putting off the bow, quiver and arrows of Indr, Ram attained the state of calmness.

### 6-112 Coronation of Vibhishan, and Hanuman to Sita (26 / 5090)

Celestial beings were extremely happy with the death of Ravan. They returned to their abode praising the contribution of Sugriv, Hanuman, Lakshaman, and chastity of Sita. Subsequently, Ram bade farewell to Matali, who returned with the chariot to Indr. To honour Sugriv, he embraced to his chest. When he looked to Lakshaman, he offered his salutation to the feet of Ram. Greeted by monkeys, Ram came back to the camp.

With a view to coronate Sugriv, as king of Lanka, Ram advised Lakshaman to go and complete the function following the customary practices. Lakshaman, asked the monkeys to fetch sea water in golden pots and with them he went to Lanka. The coronation was performed with vedic rituals. After Lakshaman, demons and monkeys sprayed holy water over Vibhishan. To express his gratitude to Ram, Vibhishan chanted his glory.

The citizens of Lanka offered auspicious gifts of curd, rice (अक्षत), sweets, paddy flakes (लावा या लाजा) and flowers. Vibhishan brought all those gifts in the service of Ram. Seeing the auspicious offer, Ram gladly accepted them.

To collect the news about Sita, Ram advised Hanuman, "With due consent of Vibhishan, go and meet Sita. Convey my wellbeing, and that of Lakshaman and Sugriva to her. Intimate her about the death of Ravan. Come back soon with her message."

### 6-113 Hanuman back with Sita's message (53 / 5143)

As commanded by Ram, Hanuman entered the city of Lanka. He was warmly greeted on way, and meeting Vibhshn, he sought his permission to see Sita in *ashok vatika*. Getting the consent of Vibhishan, he moved to *ashok vatika*, and sent her a prior intimation about his arrival. He appeared before her, and found her surrounded by demonesses. She was quietly sitting immersed in some thought. Offering his respect to her, Hanuman stood on a side. Recognising Hanuman, Sita became glad, but she couldn't speak anything. Hanuman then spoke to her, "Ram and Lakshaman with Sugriv are well and they have enquired your wellbeing. With the help of Vibhishan, Ravan has been killed, and Lanka is deemed to be under control of Ram. You should now discard your sorrow and become happy."

Hanuman praised her, "Your vow to maintain chastity and loyalty to Ram, has been able to procure today the pleasure of victory. Thus praising the power of her chastity,

Hanuman further intimated her message of Ram, "I have fulfilled my pledge of your liberation. To attain this, I renounced the pleasure of sleep (6-113-11), and putting a bridge across the sea, killed the devil demon. The city of Lanka is no longer the home of devil Ravan. It has now been offered to Vibhishan. He is excited to see you, and soon he would be in *ahsok vatika*. You should now consider this city as your home."

Sita still couldn't speak any word; Hanuman enquired, "Goddess! It seems you are immersed in some thought. Please speak."

Shedding tear of joy, she spoke to Hanuman, "The joy of victory of my husband has choked my voice. I wanted to give you some souvenir, but I don't have anything with me worth giving you. I am afraid, any of the precious materials of this material world, is found to be as worthy as this message of victory of Ram."

Hearing her, Hanuman spoke, "You are really rare, no one can assess your graceful greatness. As regards any gift to me, I am really overjoyed with this victory and your well being. I don't need anything which could enhance my joy further."

Sita was glad with Hanuman's devotion and sincerity. Appraising his performances, she mentioned, "You are alone who possess all the qualities together: righteousness, healthy mind and healthy body, brilliance, endurance, patience, humility, knowledge of scriptures and many more (6-113-26 / 28)."

Finding Sita in good mood, Hanuman sought her permission to penalize those demonesses who had been rough to her, "I have seen their misbehaviour with you. I want to torture them using my clenched fist, jerk of knees, and kick of foot. I feel like breaking their teeth, uprooting their hair, cut their nose and ears, and kill them."

Pondering for a while, she forbade Hanuman in doing this, "They are royal attendants, and were doing their duty as desired by the king. After the death of the devil, they have renounced their past actions of torturing me." She further quoted scriptures, "A saintly person does not allow any erosion in his compassion and righteousness, even if a devil continues torturing him. Endurance and forbearance are prime qualities. There is none who has not ever erred in his life."

Overjoyed by her words, Hanuman sought, "Give me your message for Ram."

Sita mentioned, "I crave for holy *darshan* (glimpse) of Ram who is beloved of devotees (6-113-49 द्रष्टुमिच्छामि भर्तारं भक्तवत्सलम्)."

Hanuman left assuring her, "Today only your desire shall be fulfilled." Coming back to Ram Hanuman repeated what conversation he had with Sita.

#### 6-114 Sita visited Ram (36 / 5179)

Hanuman submitted to Ram, "The entire battle was to liberate Sita, and the objective has now been achieved. As desired by her, kindly allow your *darshan* to Sita." Pondering over Hanuman's proposal for a while, Ram spoke to Vibhishan, "Sita should be brought here. Before she is brought here, she should be bathed and dressed with sandal paste, jewels and proper dress."

Vibhishan made preparations of royal palanquin, jewels, cloths and fragrances. Before meeting, he sent demoness messenger to inform her about his arrival. Appearing before her, he submitted with folded hands, "Accept the jewels and dress brought for you. On bathing, dress yourself with sandal, jewels and cloths. The carrier palanquin is ready. Ram wants you to see him."

Sita wanted to see Ram without any change in her dress or outfit, but Vibhishan intimated her the desire of Ram. When she learnt about the instruction of Ram, she happily accepted the proposal. After bath, she dressed herself and mounted the *shibika* (palanquin).

The demons piloted the movement of her *shibika*. On her arrival, when monkeys scrambled to see her, demons kept them at a distance to clear the crowd. Ram was a little agitated to think about her arrival after staying for a long time amidst demons.

On her arrival to camp, when Vibhishan went to inform Ram, he found him in a thoughtful mood. Ram felt a little uncomfortable, when he learnt about her arrival in a palanquin. However, he happily mentioned to Vibhishan to ask Sita to come immediately to him.

When Vibhishan and other demons, keeping monkeys at a bay, began clearing the route, Ram spoke to Vibhishan, "Monkeys are our own people, and they should not be discriminated and deprived from getting a view of Sita. There is no need of maintaining privacy. In the time of emergency, marriage, and *ygya* women are not kept within screens. She is coming to her own people, and therefore, she should come walking. This will facilitate her glimpse to monkeys."

Hanuman, Lakshaman, and Sugriv felt a little uncomfortable to note the apathy of Ram. Vibhishan was initially in a dilemma, but as asked by Ram, while Sita walked past the standing crowd, Vibhishan escorted her from back. Walking shyly, she came close to Ram, and kept gazing at his beaming face. Having seen him to her satisfaction, her face blossomed with happiness.

#### **6-115 Ram showed reservation to accept her (25 / 5204)**

When Sita stood affectionately in front of Ram, he spoke to her, "Your abduction by Ravan was an insult to me. To clear the slur from my face, I made all efforts. Today, after liberating you, the slur has been cleared. The efforts of Hanuman by crossing sea, and burning Lanka to ashes have borne fruit. The support of Vibhishan has also met desired success. Previously, the sage *Agastya* made the south of *Vindhya* accessible after eliminating *vatapi* and *elval*, similarly I have now eliminated Ravan (6-115-14)."

Speaking further to her, Ram mentioned, "Your stay for a long period with demons, create doubt about your acceptance. You have been bodily lifted and glanced by Ravan. I have reservation in accepting you. I am afraid, if I accept you, this might tarnish the clean image of *Ikshavaku* dynasty. You are free, and you may stay either in the protection of Bharat, or Lakshaman, or Sugriv, or Vibhishan. Decision is yours."

Sita was shocked to hear Ram's impression about her. She wept bitterly.



**6-116 Sita on trial (36 / 5240)**

She felt humiliated with the words of Ram. Wiping her tears, she spoke to him, "I am Janaki, born of *ygya* of Janak from the fold of earth. I didn't come through a mortal human's womb. I am divine in all respects. After my marriage with you, we stayed together for a long period. I am sure you must have understood me fully. On no occasion in the past, you had any grievance against me. Although Ravan abducted me, I was ever immersed in your thought. He lifted me bodily, and the contact of my body to him, was the compulsion of the situation. I never thought of any person other than you. When Hanuman visited Lanka, you could have discarded me at that time. Then only I could have ended my life, and that could have saved every one of you from taking so much pains of bridging sea and fighting demons. Today I hear you speak and express doubt on me. This is shorn of proper grace expected from a person like you."

Presenting her side frankly, she asked Lakshaman, "Prepare a pyre and I would enter the fire. That is the only option to me." When Lakshaman looked towards Ram, he noticed his nod to this proposal.

The pyre was immediately prepared, and Sita after offering round of respect to Ram, moved towards the pyre. Before she stepped into the burning fire, she prayed fire god, "If I have protected my chastity, protect me." Saying thus she entered the fire. The gods, sages and other celestial beings were mute witness to her rising to the pyre. Monkeys made cry of shock and sorrow.

**6-117 Brahma glorified Ram (32 / 5272)**

When Ram heard the cry of monkeys, he became thoughtful. In the meanwhile, eminent gods, *Indr*, *Kuber*, *Varun*, *Shiv* and *Brahma* appeared before Ram. With folded hands they submitted, "You know everything, and you are genesis of all beings. You are beginning, middle and end of all beings. Being Vishnu himself (6-117-6), how do you afford to discard Sita?"

Ram addressed them, "I take myself as an ordinary human being, son of Dasarath. You may enlighten me."

Brahma glorified his supreme divinity, "You are *narayan* who holds disc, *sharang dhanush*, *nandak khadg*, and *srivats*. It is you who redeemed earth as *Varah*, and measured the universe as *trivikram*. You are *vishwakshen* (6-117-13 / 14), and four handed *srihari*. You have several names: *Hrushikesh*, *Purushottam*, *Krishna*, *Padmanabh* etc. You are eternal universal spirit; truth and righteousness are your attributes. I am *brahma*, and I am your heart; *Sarswati* is your speech. *Ved* is from you. Fire is your anger. Moon is your happiness. The creation exists in you only. On end of the universe, you exist as *shesh* over cosmic water. You are refuge to all sages. Your *darshan*, and chanting of glory auger ultimate auspiciousness."

**6-118 Sita sanctified (22 / 5294)**

On completion of Brahma's chanting of Ram's glory, *Agni* (fire god) appeared holding Sita in her lap, as a father holds his daughter. Sita looked like a molten gold, resplendent like the rising sun. She was exactly identical to the form in which she had entered fire a little earlier. Fire god got up, and handed over Sita to Ram, "She is your holy consort,



and absolutely free of any blemishes. In her mind, thought, action and speech she never turned to anyone other than you. Offer your greeting to her.”

Ram was glad to see Sita, sanctified by the fire god. With tears in his eyes, he mentioned, “As regards me, I was sure of her loyalty and affection to me. I didn’t check her while entering fire, only because I knew she will come out sanctified, and that would be a firm message to the world about her chastity and true affection to me.”

Sita was received with a warm welcome, and affectionate greeting.

### **6-119 Dasarath turned to Ram (39 / 5333)**

Shiv expressed his greetings to Ram, “By killing Ravan, a great deal of wellbeing of the earth has been accomplished. The devil demon was the darkness over the world. His elimination has removed that darkness and light pervades in all quarters.

He continued, “Your father, Dasarath, who had been to *Indr lok* is now here in sky, sitting in an aircraft. Being his son, you have brought auspicious glory to him. You pay respect to him with your brother Lakshaman.”

Ram and Lakshaman immediately offered their respectful salutation to Dasarath. He was dressed in an excellent celestial attire. Coming close to Ram and Lakshaman, he embraced Ram and took him in his lap. He praised his performances, “You have eliminated the enemy, and completed your term of forest. This has earned glory to you. I still remember the words of Kaikeyi while sending you in forest. I am proud of you, as Kahol, was proud of his son Ashtavakra (6-119-17). I have learnt from gods that by killing Ravan, you have established that you are supreme divine spirit. I admire the fate of *Kausalya* who would greet you on your return from forest. The citizens of Ayodhya are fortunate that they would enjoy your coronation as monarch of Ayodhya. Bharat has deep affection for you. I would be glad to see you together with him. To please me, you accepted the forest life of fourteen years. It has now come to end. You have attained eternal glory, and now I wish to see you enthroned.”

When Dasarath became quiet, Ram sought his blessings to Bharat and Kaikeyi, “When I was preparing to leave for forest, you expressed your anguish over them and declared to disown them. I seek your favour for being kind on them.” Dasarath consented to his proposal and wished to bless them.

Subsequently, Dasarath looked towards Lakshaman, who, standing with folded hands, was waiting for his turn. Embracing him, he mentioned, “By serving Sita and Ram you have earned eternal and ineffable glory. Fortunate future be with you.”

Turning to Sita, Dasarath addressed her as daughter, and mentioned, “You should not feel otherwise when Ram announced to discard you. His intention was to prove your worth in the eyes of the world. You proved your chastity, and passed the test. No other woman dare take such test. You have enhanced your glory.”

Dasarath blessed Ram, Lakshaman, and Sita, and returned back to *Indr lok*.

**6-120 Indr revived dead monkeys (24 / 5357)**

After Brahma and Shiv, it was Indr's term. He greeted Ram and enquired, "Do you wish anything from me? Ram sought his help in reviving the dead monkeys, "These monkeys quitting their family came to help me. I wish, those who have sacrificed their life, let them be revived again. Those who have been grievously injured, let them be made healthy. When they go back and meet their near and dear one, let there be no dearth of fruits, roots and water for them."

Indr granted and mentioned, "Although all these demands are tough, but as committed let it be immediately fulfilled."

Soon the dead monkeys revived, and the injured ones regained their initial physique.

Other gods collectively greeted Ram, "It is time for you to depart to Ayodhya. We wish to see you on throne as a king. Sita has fond affection for you. Let your grace be upon her. Bharat is anxious for your return, make him happy."

Saluting all the gods, Ram advised everyone including Lakshaman to relax and take rest.

**6-121 Vibhishan's hosting (30 / 5387)**

When the night was over, Vibhishan arrived in the morning with lots of excellent cloths, jewels and fragrances to the camp. He submitted to Ram, "I pray you to take holy bath and accept these cloths and jewels." Ram talked about his obligation to Bharat, "I didn't accept the proposal of Bharat at Chitrakoot under the condition that I would return to him in Ayodhya, the very next day of the end of my forest term. Until I meet Bharat, I would neither take bath nor accept royal dress. I advise you to greet Sugriv and others with the royal provisions."

When Ram expressed his concern for constraint of time in reaching Ayodhya, Vibhishan assured him, "*Pushpak viman* of *Kuber* is in royal possession of Lanka. It was grabbed by Ravan for his personal use. It can take you to Ayodhya at your desired speed."

Vibhishan made earnest request to Ram, "If you consider me worthy of greeting you, allow me a chance to host your stay with Lakshaman and Sita for some more time. This will give me immense satisfaction."

Ram politely turned down his proposal, "I respect your affection, but now I am more excited to see Bharat, Kausalya, Sumitra, and Kaikeyi. Besides this, I am curious to see my friend *Guh*, and citizens of Ayodhya. Don't ask me to stay a single more moment here."

Realising urgency of Ram's departure, Vibhishan invoked *pushpak*, and it arrived instantly. Ram was extremely glad to see the presence of *pushpak*. It was a magnificent aerial chariot decorated with precious gold, silver and gems. Pushpak had facility to expand to accommodate as many persons as were on board.

### 6-122 Departure to Ayodhya (27 / 5414)

*Pushpak* was ready, decorated with fresh flowers. Seeing Ram excited to move to *pushpak*, Sugriv submitted to him, "What service is due for me?" Ram advised Vibhishan, who was standing nearby, "Treat these monkeys who devotedly fought for us with ample gift of jewels and gems. They secured the kingdom of Lanka for you. The king should be generous in treating the attendants."

While Vibhishan treated the monkeys fabulously, Ram, Sita and Lakshaman occupied their seat in *pushpak*.

In sweet words, Ram advised Sugriv to go to Kishkindha with all the monkeys, and Vibhishan to stay in Lanka to look after the well being of the citizens.

When Ram sought permission to leave for Ayodhya, Vibhishan and Sugriv submitted to him, "We also wish to give company to you, and offer our respects in the feet of mother Kausalya. We would be fortunate, if we participated in your coronation ceremony. Thereafter we will return back to our respective places.

Ram gladly consented to their proposal. Vibhishan with minsiters, and Sugriva with all monkeys (including Hanuman) and bears (Jambvan and others), boarded *pushpak*. There was no scramble for seat over the celestial aircraft, *pushpak*; everybody was comfortably accommodated.

### 6-123 Places on way to Ayodhya (57 / 5471)

When *pushpak* was airborne, Ram showed Sita various places of interest in Lanka, "This is Lanka city situated on top of *trikoot* mountain. Here is the place where ashes of Ravan lie. And these are the places where other demons kumbhakarn, Indrajeet and others were killed. This is the place where we pitched our main camp."

As *pushpak* moved ahead, he showed the bridge set by Nal over sea, "See this vast sea full of conch and shells. During Hanuman's crossing, this is the place where *hirnyanabh* (*mainak*) mountain rose up in courtesy. This place is *setubandh* where we pitched our camp on the northern shore, and installed *mahadev* before commencing the construction of the bridge. Here only Vibhishan arrived to see me for the first time when he deserted Lanka. *Setubandh* shall be an important pilgrimage place in the future where people will offer their worship."

*Pushpak* hovered over *Kishkindha*, and when Ram pointed out the place where Vali was killed, Sita expressed her desire to pick up Tara mother of Angad and wife of Vali, wife of Sugriv, and wives of other chiefs of the monkeys to take them to Ayodhya. *Pushpak* landed near the city of *Kishkindha*. Entering the cave city, Sugriv spoke to Tara, "Let us expedite in boarding the wives of the chief monkeys over *pushpk*, and we will together enjoy the stay in Ayodhya, and meet the queens there."

When they all boarded and met Sita, *pushpak* rose up, and Ram showed shining *rishyamook* to Sita which was full of precious metals and gold, "This place over the mountain, I met Sugriv for the first time and took a vow to kill Vali. This *pampa* lake, down below is full of natural resources in its immediate vicinity. Here I was haunted with your sweet memory, and had wailed bitterly. Near its bank, I met *Sabari*, a great pious lady."

As *puspak* picked up its forward journey, Ram continued acquainting Sita with various places connected with their forest life, “This place is dreadful to look at, and here I killed Kabandh cutting down his one *yojan* long arms. This large tree in Janasthan is related to *Jatayu* where for your sake he sacrificed his life. Khar, Dushan, and Trishira were killed, on this place of Janasthan. This is our hermitage from where Ravan abducted you. This is *Godavari* river, and the other place surrounded by banana plants belongs to the sage *Agastya*. Here is *Sutikshan’s ashram*, and this another place belongs to the saint *Sharbhang* where *Indr* came to meet him. This is where *Viradh* was killed. We see now those ascetics whom we had met earlier. This is grand hermitage of *Atri*, where you met his holy wife *Anusuya*. Here is radiant *Chitrakoot* where Bharat persuaded for our return. This grand *Yamuna* flowing past the green woods, leads us to splendid *ashram* of *Bhardwaj*. *Tripathga ganga* is how lovely to look at! The chirping birds, and *Brahmins* performing their rituals have further enhanced her grandeur. *Shringberpur* looks very attractive, and my bosom friend *Guha* resides here. *Saryu* is seen surrounded by groves, trees and oblation squares. Here lies the capital city of our father. You have come back to *Ayodhya* after your long stay in forest, salute this city with reverence.”

There was a scramble among monkeys and demons to have glance of the city of *Ayodhya* full of grand structures, elephants and horses which looked like *amaravatipuri* of *Indr*.

#### 6-124 Ram met Bhardwaj (23 / 5494)

Making an aerial survey, *pushpak* came back to *Yamuna* river, and landed down near the *ashram* of *Bhardwaj*. It was *panchami*<sup>39</sup> (पंचमी तिथि fifth day of the fortnight) and the term of fourteen years of exile has ended on this day. Offering due respect to *Bhardwaj*, he enquired, “I wonder whether you have any information about *Ayodhya*. Is Bharat occupied in the well being the citizens? Do the mothers survive ?”

The sage intimated, “Bharat, in the form of an ascetic having hair lock and bark cloths, awaits your arrival. He is obedient to your commands, and with due honour to your wooden foot wear, he disposes of the royal responsibilities.”

The sage continued, “When you moved to forest, seeing you in an ascetic dress accompanied by Sita and Lakshaman, I was in sorrow. Today I am glad to see you back registering your victory over the demons. You have eliminated all the devil thorns from the path of mendicants in Dandak. They now happily devote their time in meditation and penance. I also learnt from the eyes of my penance about abduction of Sita, your friendship with Sugriv, killing of Vali, crossing of sea by Hanuman, locating Sita, putting bridge across sea, and killing of Ravan with his fellow demons.”

<sup>39</sup> In common practice, *ashwin shukl dashami* (tenth day of bright fortnight of *ashwin*, post rainy month) is celebrated as victory day of Ram. If on *panchami* (6-124-1) he was at *Bhardwaj asharam*, then the *dashami* has to be understood with a greater rationality. In *sarg* 92, *shlok* 66, Ravan is seen talking to his minister on *chaturdashi*, i.e., 14 day of the dark fortnight. Using this as datum, Ram talking to Bharadwaj, in *sarg* 124, on *panchmi* appears to be consistent. The *panchmi* is definitely of bright fortnight (but not mentioned in *valmiki* whether dark or bright), because Ravan was the last post who had faught on *amavasya*. The following day of his stay at *Bhardwaj ashram*, i.e., on 6<sup>th</sup> day of bright fortnight Ram arrived in *Ayodhya*. There could be a possibility that his coronation was conducted on 10<sup>th</sup> day of the bright fortnight. In some part of India (Puri, *Srimandirof* lord Jagannath), coronation of Lord Ram is celebrated on *vaishakh*, *krishn navami* (9 th day of dark fortnight of *vaishakh*).

Conveying the wellbeing of *Ayodhya*, he mentioned, “My one disciple, Pravriti, regularly visits *Ayodhya* and I know all about there from him.”

The sage then enquired Ram whether he wished any boon from him, and he also requested him to stay at night at his ashram.”

Ram accepting his invitation to spend the night, requested for one favour, “The zone from here to *Ayodhya* should be made lustrous green. The trees should bear fruits, and yield ample honey.”

The sage blessed, “Let it be so.” Soon three *yojan* of corridor on way to *Ayodhya* became rich in fruit and honey bearing trees. The accompanying monkeys on way to *Ayodhya* enjoyed the fruits and honey to their fill.

### 6-125 Hanuman on errand (46 / 5540)

Ram sent Hanuman as a messenger to Guh and Bharat, before landing over to Bhardwaj. He mentioned, “Convey my wellbeing to Guh, and collecting his wellbeing proceed to Bharat. Narrating about my adventure storeys to Bharat, intimate him about my arrival. Try to gather his impression about me. In association of Kaikeyi, if you notice change in his attitude, convey me soon so that I can find some other place for my stay and allow Bharat to enjoy the kingdom of *Ayodhya* forever.”

As desired by Ram, Hanuman arrived at *shringaberpur*, and met Guh. He informed him, “Ram with Sita and Lakshaman has arrived at *Bhardwaj ashram*. He will soon see you here.”

From there, Hanuman proceeded to *Ayodhya*. On way he crossed *prashuram thirth*, and rivers of *balukani*, *baruthi*, and *gomati* and huge forest of *sal* trees. Crossing several cities, he arrived in the groves near *Nandigram* which was as beautiful as *Nandanvan* of *Indr*, and *Chaitrarath* of *Kuber*. One *yojan* away from *Ayodhya*, he saw Bharat in an ascetic garb, hair locked to a mat. Observing austerity, he had become lean and thin. Keeping Ram’s wooden footwear, he used to issue decrees to the citizens. Impressed by the Bharat’s style of living, the people of *Ayodhya* had also maintained optimum austerity of abjuring conspicuous consumption. Bharat had ensured total protection to all four classes (चतुर्वर्ण्यस्य लोकस्य त्रातारं सर्वतो भयात् 6-125-33 ) of people. The royal ministers had also adopted garment of *gerua*<sup>40</sup> (काषाय वस्त्र) (light red) colour.

In the guise of a human being, Hanuman appeared before Bharat and spoke to him, “Ram who had been in Dandak in the garb of an ascetic, has conveyed his wellbeing to you and has enquired about your wellbeing. Killing Ravn, he is coming back happily with Sita and Lakshaman. Soon you will be able to see him here.”

Overjoyed with the pleasant news of arrival of Ram, Bharat had a spell of swoon. Soon he recovered, and with tears in his eyes, embraced Hanuman. He spoke to him, “What shall I give you in reward? I don’t find any gift as worthy and precious as the news of arrival of Ram. However, I reward you with one hundred thousand cows, hundred vassal villages, and sixteen beautiful maiden girls in your service.”

### 6-126 Hanuman recited legend of Ram (55 / 5595)

<sup>40</sup> This colour of body wrapper usually forms garb of mendicants and those who lead a life of renunciation.

Bharat expressed his desire to learn more about Ram. To acquaint him, Hanuman initiated reciting the legend, "You are aware about preparation of Ram's coronation, Kaikeyi's claims, Ram's forest departure with Sita and Lakshaman, death of Dasarath, your denial of accepting the throne, meeting him at Chitrakoot, and coming back with his footwear to Ayodhya."

Hanuman continued the further legend, "After your departure from Chitrakoot, Ram Lakshaman and Sita moved to Janasthan. On way they killed Viradh. Thereafter, in the evening they stayed at *Sharabhang muni's ashram* who departed for higher spiritual world. Moving deep in Janasthan, they encountered a demoness Surpanakha who wanted to marry Ram, but Lakshaman using his sword cut her nose and ears. She instigated Khar against Ram, who made attack over him with fourteen thousand demons. Ram killed the entire demons' army along with Khar, Dushan and Trishira. Surpanakha then informed Ravan about Ram, Sita and Lakshaman. Mareech another demon, on the behest of Ravan, disguised as a golden deer attracted Sita's attention. When Ram went to grab that golden deer, Lakshaman also followed him later. Seeing Sita alone, Ravan stole her away forcefully as mars मंगल afflicts *rohini रोहिणी* (6-126-26). On way he was opposed by Jatayu, but killing him, Ravan brought Sita to Lanka. When Ram came back he didn't find Sita, and met Jatayu on way. Then they began her search. On way he killed Kabandh, and arriving at *rishyamuk* forged friendship bond with Sugriv. He killed Vali, and Sugriv was made king of monkeys. Sugriv sent one hundred million monkeys to find out Sita, and I was also one of them. We were not able to locate her within specified period of one month. Subsequently we came across, Sampathi, brother of Jatayu. He told us about location of Sita in Lanka. I crossed the one hundred *yojan* wide sea, and met Sita in Lanka. I handed over Ram's ring to her, and brought her crest jewel to Ram. Monkeys gathered to move to Lanka. Nal constructed the bridge over sea. Landing in Lanka, Neel killed Prahast, Lakshaman killed Indrajeet, Ram killed Kumbhakarn and Ravan. *Indr, Varun, Kuber, Mahadev, Brahma* and *Dasarth* appeared to Ram and blessed him. Ram boarding *pushpak* came to *Kishkindha*. From there he came to *Bhardwaj ashram*, and he is staying there. Tomorrow in *pushya nakshatr* (6-126-54), You will have his auspicious *darshan*."

### 6-127 Preparations to welcome Ram (64 / 5659)

Learning all about Ram and his auspicious arrival, Bharat advised Shatrughn, "Perform worship in all the temples. Invite Brahmins, queens, citizens, ministers, army, and tomorrow morning we have to welcome our hero brother who is arriving back to Ayodhya with Sita and Lakshaman."

Shatrughn immediately commenced the welcome preparations on a war footing. The road from *Nandigram* to *Ayodhya* was levelled with of spray of cold water to cut down dust. Flowers and paddy corns were strewn over the roads. Mansions were decorated with festoons.

In the morning, Kausalya, Sumitra, and Kaikeyi arrived at Nandigram. All citizens, Brahmins gathered to accompany Bharat. Holding footwear of Ram over his head, Bharat surrounded by royal bards stood in readiness to accord warm reception. Two large umbrella bedecked with white flowers also accompanied him in readiness as a mark of royal insignia for Ram. Eight royal ministers Dhristi, Jayant, Vijay, Sidharth, Arthsadhak, Ahok, Mantrpal, and Sumantr mounting on elephants moved out, to join the

reception group. Infantry and cavalry carrying colourful flags piloted the welcome crowd. The sky rented with welcome sound of conch and trumpets.

Bharat was so excited that he couldn't help enquiring again from Hanuman, "How long shall we await his arrival? Is it true that he is coming?"

Encouraging Bharat, Hanuman spoke, "*Bhardwaj* has blessed the route from *Prayag* to *Ayodhya* to be full of fruit and honey bearing trees. The monkeys might have been lost in the enjoyment of fruits. I hear tumultuous sound of monkeys, they could be crossing Gomati. Here it is! See, *pushpak* has arrived. It looks like another moon, speeding towards *Ayodhya*. *Pushpak* is now in possession of Ram after killing Ravan. It was initially gifted by *Brahma* to *Kuber* and from him, Ravan had forcefully grabbed it. It has speed of mind. Sita, Ram and Lakshaman with Sugriv and Vibhishan are about to land."

Leaving their mounts of horses and elephants, the crowd rushed forth running. In honour of Ram, Bharat offered *arghya*, *padya* and *achamaniyam*. Sighting Ram from a distance, Bharat offered his salutation to him. *Pushpak* landed over ground, and Bharat rising on board offered his salutation on feet of Ram. Ram picked up Bharat, and putting him on his lap, embraced him to his chest. Getting greeted by Lakshaman, Bharat uttering his name offered his respect to Sita. Thereafter, Bharat embraced Sugriv, Jambvan, Angad, Maind, Dwid, Neel, Rishabh, Sushen, Nal, Gavaksh, Gandhmadan, Sharabh and Panas. Exchanging greetings to each other, Bharat mentioned to Sugriv, "You are our fifth brother (6-127-47).

Thereafter Shatrughn offered his respects to Ram, Sita, Lakshaman and others accompanying them in the craft.

Ram came down and offered his respect on feet of Kausalya, Sumitra and Kaikeyi. Thereafter, he came to *guru* Vashishth and offered respect on his foot. The citizens of Ayodhya sounded their uproarious reception to Ram.

Bharat took the footwear to Ram, and prayed him to accept that which he had held for fourteen years as a souvenir of his kingdom. He mentioned, "With your accepting of this foot wear, you have accepted your kingdom. I am extremely glad to offer back your kingdom to you. Kindly inspect the royal treasury, stores and army. They are now ten times of what they were earlier."

With fond affection, Ram took Bharat in his lap while boarded in *pushpak* again, and with entire army he went to hermitage of Bharat. When *pushpak* landed, he stood on ground and commanded *pushpak* to go back to *Kuber* and stay there in his service. As directed *pushpak* left for the abode of *Kuber*.

Greeting with reverence his preceptor Vashishth, and his child friend Suyagya (son of Vashishth), Ram offered them seat. Taking another seat, he also took his position.

### 6-128 Coronation ceremony (125 / 5784)

When they were seated, Bharat submitted to Ram, "Honouring my mother, You offered me this kingdom. Now I give it back to you, as it is. I wish that your coronation should be performed at the earliest. You should now be treated like a sovereign." Ram gladly indicated his acceptance.



**Royal bathing:**

Shatrughn sent for barbers who stood surrounding Ram and others. Those barbers made all preparations for customary royal bath. First Bharat got his bath. Following him Lakshaman got his bath. Thereafter, Sugriv and Vibhishan were bathed. Finally, arranging his hair in royal style Ram completed his bath. Shatrughn anointed Ram and Lakshaman with sandal paste, and dressed them up with flowers, gems and precious garments.

The queens with their own hands bathed Sita, and dressed her in royal outfit. Kausalya felt great pleasure in dressing up the wives of the monkeys.

**Royal processsion:**

Sumantr kept ready a splendorous chariot yoked with green horses for Ram's procession in the city. When Ram occupied his seat, Bharat worked as charioteer (6-128-28), and Shatrughn stood holding the royal umbrella. Lakshaman on one side, and Vibhishan on the other side held the *chavar* fanning lightly his face. Sita and wives of monkeys occupied royal chariots, and joined the procession. Sugriv was mounted over an elephant called Shatrunjaya. Monkeys, in the guise of humans, were being carried over nine thousand elephants. They were all dressed up with precious jewels. The procession was piloted by cavalry and infantry. This was followed by trumpeters sounding conches and drums. Following them was the group of singers and dancers who produced auspicious music, song and dances. They were followed by people carrying sacred rice (अक्षत), golden pot, cows, Brahmins, and maiden girls carrying sweets. Following them was the fleet of chariots keeping Ram's chariot in front. While the procession moved on, the citizens came forward to greet Ram with varieties of gifts. Offering their gift, they joined the procession building the rear crowd of the procession. The flags of the houses were raised in honour of Ram. Finally the procession ended at the royal palace.

Ram entered the personal chamber of his father, and offering his salutation to Kausalya, Sumitra and Kaikey, spoke to Bharat, "Sugriv shall stay at my palace." Shatrughn immediately made all arrangements for comfortable stay of Sugriv.

**Coronation (consecration and crowing)**

Bharat requested Sugriv to arrange holy sea water for the coronation of Ram. Taking golden pots Hanuman, Jambvan, Rishabh, and Gavay went in four directions. Jambvan brought sea water from east sea, Rishabh brought from south sea, Gavay brought from west sea, and Hanuman brought from north sea.

When all the arrangements were made, Vashishth invited Ram and Sita and gave them a golden seat. Assisted by sages: Vamdev, Jabali, Kashyap, Katyayan, Suygya, Gautam, and Vijay, Vashishth initiated the scriptural procedure of coronation.

Fragrant water mixed with herbs was sprayed over Ram and Sita as a measure of consecration. This was initiated by Vashishth and the other seven sages. Following them, Brahmins, maiden girls, ministers, chiefs of army, and elite citizens performed the consecration. The celestial beings, and gods staying in sky also offered holy water consecration over the royal couple of Ram and Sita.



The hereditary resplendent crown was being used from the time of Manu. It was gifted by Brahma to him. On getting sanctified by ritualistic procedures, the crown was made ready. Vashishth, assisted by the sages, completed the scriptural procedures. It was Vashishth who finally crowned Ram. Shatrughn stood holding the white royal umbrella over his head. Vibhishan and Sugriv held *chavar* on his sides. *Vayu* god, as inspired by *Indr*, offered a garland made of hundred gold lotuses, and a necklace of precious pearls. *Gandharv* presented the sweet songs and music, whereas celestial dancers presented captivating dances. The earth became rich with the fragrant breeze, flowers, lush green crops, and trees laden with fruits.

### **Precious presents**

Ram distributed among Brahmins one hundred thousand horses, same number of milk giving cows, hundred bulls, three hundred million gold coins, and lot of precious gems, and garments. He gifted one brilliant gold and gem necklace to Sugriv. Angad was honoured with two golden armlets matted with precious gems. He put his own pearl necklace received from *Vayu* god to Sita's neck; besides he gave two divine garments, and several more precious jewels to her.

Sita wanted to gift some valuable gift to Hanuman. She took out the pearl necklace received from Ram, and looked towards him. He spoke consenting to her, "Without hesitation use your discretion." She passed that precious present to Hanuman.

### **Farewell**

Precious gifts were given to all the monkeys. They were glad, and subsequently they departed to their respective abode. Monkeys went to Kishkindha, and demons went to Lanka.

### **Rule of Ram**

While in saddle of glorious kingdom of *Ikshvaku* dynasty, Ram offered Lakshman to assume the position of regent prince. When Lakshman didn't accept the position, Ram designated Bharat as the regent prince. Ruling for eleven thousand years, he performed several sacrifices called *paundrik*, *ashwamedh*, and *vajpeya*. He earned the reputation of conducting hundred *aswamedha ygya*.

During his rule, there was no fear from afflictions. Occurrence of crime was never heard. People died on coming of old age. No premature death occurred to anybody. Therefore, no widow wailing was ever heard. The normal life span of several thousands of years. People were peace loving, calm and happy. They were righteous, and never resorted to speaking lie.

*Reciting and discussing the glory of Ram was the common topic among the people (6-128-102 रामो रामो राम इति प्रजानामभवन् कथा : । रामभूतं जगदभूद् रामे राज्यं प्रशासति ।।). The environment was fully pervaded with Ram.*

Crops never failed. Clouds poured timely rain, and trees were laden with fruits. Cool breeze blew all around. People of four classes were greedless, and were totally satisfied

with their assigned responsibilities. (6-128-104 ब्राह्मणाः क्षत्रिया वैश्याः शूद्रा लोभविवर्जिताः । स्वकर्म सु प्रवर्तन्ते तुष्टाः स्वैरेव कर्मभिः । । )

### **Glory to *adikavya* Ramayan**

This Ramayan is called *adikavya* आदिकाव्य and was first composed by Valmiki. Its recitation and listening auger desired auspiciousness. Those desirous of children get children, those desirous of wealth get wealth. The women shall attain children of the same glory and fame as were available to Kausalya, Sumitra and Kaikeyi. It is required to listen to its recitation with a calm mind abjuring anger and crime. The recitation of legend of coronation brings about victory to the kings.

One should worship and recite this scripture with conviction. In doing so all gods are pleased. It secures pleasure of *Ram*, a manifestation of *Vishnu* (6-128-119 प्रीयते सततं रामः स हि विष्णु सनातनः । ). *Narayan* Himself has incarnated as *Ram*, and *Shesh* has incarnated as *Lakshman* (6-128-120). Those who inscribe this Ramayan, are worthy of attaining heaven.

Conclusion: "Its regular listening ensures longevity, fame and affection among brothers, and augers auspiciousness."

Srimate Ramanujaya namah**Preface**

*Uttar kand* is glossary to some of the references made earlier, mostly in *yuddh kand*. From *sarg* 1 though 34 it describes the biographical history of demons and Ravan. *Sarg* 35 and 36 are dedicated to the legend of Hanumanjee.

Thereafter mostly it covers the aftermath of lord Ram's coronation: separation from Sita, coronation of Shatrughn as king of Madhurapuri (present Mathura near Vrundavan), legends depicting significance of *ashvamedh ygya*, performance of *asvamedh ygya* at Naimisharnya, arrival of Lav kush, recital of *valmiki ramayan*, coronation of sons of the brothers and Lav kusha, and ultimate departure to the divine abode.

The number of *Sarg* and *shlok* in each *kand* are as below:

<i>Balkand</i>	77	2266
<i>Ayodhya</i>	119	4310
<i>Aranya</i>	75	2467
<i>Kishkindha</i>	67	2362
<i>sundar</i>	68	2858
<i>yuddh</i>	128	5784
<i>Uttar</i>	111	3722
<b>Total</b>	<b>645</b>	<b>23769</b>

**Srimann Narayan Charnau Sharnam Prapaddye.** (श्रीमन्नारायण चरणौ शरणम् प्रपदे )

Submission:

Srikrishna Prapnnachari  
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<sup>1</sup> This *sarg* 7-59/1 and subsequent *sarg* 7-59/2 are not common in prevalent several versions of *valmiki ramayan*.

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<sup>2</sup> Refer the next sarg 104, shlok-2 which defines what is kal. It is the time keeper of every being.

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*Srimate Ramanujaya namah*

## **Uttar kand**

**(111 sarg)**

### **7-1 Sages with Ram (41 / 41)**

As promised by Ram, he achieved the target of elimination of demons and establishment of righteousness. For such a great welfare of common mass, the sages thought to express their obligation by glorifying him. With this aim they arrived in *Ayodhya*. Those who arrived from the east were Kaushik, Yavkrit, Gargya, Galav, and Kanv (son of Medhatithi). Accompanying Agastya, and coming from the south were Swastyatreya, Namuchi, Pramuchi, Atri, Sumukh, and Vimukh. The sages who stay in the west were Nrushang, Kavash, Dhaumya, and Kausheya; they arrived with their disciples. Seven sages known as *saptrishi* (सप्तर्षि), are Vashishth, Kashyap, Atri, Viswamitr, Gautam, Jamdagni, and Bhardwaj, and they eternally stay in the north. Some of them were already present in *Ayodhya*, and the rest also arrived to join the group of the sages coming to *Ayodhya*.

Together they gathered on the royal gate, and Agastya asked the guard to intimate Ram of their arrival. On the command of Ram, when they were respectfully ushered inside the palace, Ram greeted them with folded palms. They were given grand golden seats topped with *kusha* under the deer skin. When Ram completed their worship with *arghya*, *padya*, and *achaman*, sages praised him for his excellent performance of killing the demons, "It is a great fortune that Ravan, Kumbhakarn, Indrajeet, Prahast, Atikaya, Kumbh, Nikumbh and host of other devils have been eliminated. Lakshaman's effort in killing Indrajeet is noteworthy, and he needs a special felicitation for this."

Ram was surprised at the special reference of Indrajeet. He enquired from the sages, "What is special about Indrajeet? How did he earn his potential?"

### **7-2 Pulastya and Vishrva (34 / 75)**

Introducing *Indrajeet*, Agastya spoke to Ram, "Before describing the potential he earned, it would be proper to take a look at the heritage he comes from. Back in *satyug*, sage Pulastya was a worthy son of Brahma. Because of his super saintly qualities, he was highly respected by gods. Once he went to the hermitage of Trunbindu, situated near *meru* mount, and continued to stay there.

The area around there was rich in natural resources. Delicious seasonal fruits, and clean water were available in abundance. The natural scene being charming, celestial dancers accompanied by daughters of sages used to throng the place for pleasure. Pulastya felt disturbance in his spiritual pursuit. One day, he asked the gathering of the damsels to quit, and never come back to that place, otherwise those who will fall in his visual sight would go pregnant. Afraid of his curse, celestial danceres didn't turn up again. The daughter of Trunbindu was unaware of this incident, and she alone came as usual

expecting the arrival of her group mates. When none turned up, she heard the rhythmic recitation of *ved* by Pulastya, and inadvertently drew close to his practice place. When the sage raised his eyebrow and had a view of her, her body was afflicted by his curse of pregnancy. Her complexion turned pale, and afraid of the incident she rushed to her father Trunbindu. He used his potential of penance and knew what had happened. Holding the hand of his daughter, he came to Pulastya and offered her as his attendant and consort.

Accepting her, Pulastya spent some time together, and one day, impressed by her conduct, the sage mentioned, “ I first saw you while reciting *ved* (वेद), and you heard that, therefore you will be blessed with a son who will later be renowned for his profound learning in *ved*, and shall be called *vishrava* (विश्रवा meaning one who heard ved).” Subsequently the child born to her was named Vishrava and took up the path set by his worthy father Pulastya.

### 7-3 Kuber, son of Vishrava (36 / 111)

By his conduct, practice and nature, Vishrava turned out to be a true follower of his father Pulastya. Soon he earned the reputation for his profound learning of *ved* and hallmark of righteous conduct. Impressed by his qualities, sage *Bhardwaj* offered his daughter to him. In course of time, he was blessed with a son, who was named *Vaishnavan* (वैश्रवण या कुवेर).

*Vaishnavan* had inherent qualities of his father and toeing the worthy path of penance for thousands of years, he pleased *Brahma*. Initially for one thousand years he stayed on water, and in the following one thousand years he stayed only on air. In later years he stopped taking breathing also. Pleased by his severe penance, gods and *Brahma* arrived to bless him. When *Brahma* asked about his wishes, he mentioned, “I want to be a protector of the universe.” Pleased by his noble aim, he blessed him to be so. *Brahma* mentioned, “Subsequent to first three *Yama*, *Indr* and *Varun*, I was contemplating the creation of the other one, and that fourth position is offered to you. You will look after the treasure of the celestials, and I also handover one *pushpak viaman* to facilitate your movement to the desired places at desired speed.” Gods consented to *Brahma*’s offer to *Vaishnavan* and dispersed.

*Vaishnavan* narrated the story of his securing of blessings to his father, *Vishrava*, and enquired from him, “*Brahma* didn’t assign any place for my stay. Where shall I have my abode?” *Vishrava* assigning him a suitable place to stay mentioned, “On the sea shore there is a mountain called *trikoot*. *Vishwakarma* had established a beautiful city using gold and precious gems. This city is called *Lanka* and has deep ditches around its golden ramparts. Previously it was inhabited by demons, but afraid of *Vishnu*, they deserted the city. You may occupy the city and make it your capital. Happily *Vaishnavan* entered the city, and with his peaceful stay, other demons gradually joined him and became prosperous. From time to time, *Vaishnavan* (also called *Kuber*) used to pay visit to his parents.

#### 7-4 Demons' race (32 / 143)

Ram was surprised to learn that some more demons other than Ravan used to exist beyond Lanka; he requested Agastya to give detail account on this aspect. Agastya narrated one incident of Brahma, "Initially Brahma, who was born from the lotus flower, created several creatures to protect the water of sea. Some of them proclaimed, "We will provide protection (रक्षा)", and some announced to worship (यक्ष) the sea. Those dedicated to protection (रक्षा) became demon (राक्षस), and those taking over worship became yaksh (यक्ष). This is how two groups emerged."

Deliberating the lineage of demons, Agastya mentioned, "Hetu and Prahetu were two brothers. The former, Hetu was mighty and endowed with a huge body. The latter, Prahetu being cool minded resorted to long term penance. Hetu looking for a bride married the sister of Kal called Bhaya. Subsequently he was blessed with a mighty son called Vidyutkesh. Gradually Vidyutkesh grew with a strong body like his father. He was married to daughter of Sandhya, called Salakatanakata. Later, Salakatanakata gave birth to a male child on the top of *Manadarachal*. Deserting the child there, she resumed the lustrous life with her husband. Shiv and Parvati, while passing over Mandarachal, heard the cry of the nascent child. Realising the immense compassion of Parvati over the child, Shiv blessed him to instantly attain the youthfulness of the age of his mother. He also provided him immortality, and an aircraft for his movement which was as large as a town. This child was later called Sukesh. Subsequently Parvati blessed the entire race of demons, to procreate fast with substantially reduced period of pregnancy, and after birth, the child to grow instantly to the age of mother."

#### 7-5 Expanding family of Sukesh (47 / 190)

A *gandharv* called Gramani, being impressed by the splendour of Sukesh, married his daughter Devavati with him. They produced fire like radiant three sons Malyavan, Sumali, and Mali. They grew knowledgeable like three *ved mantr* of *rig*, *yaju*, and *sam*. At the same time, they became dreadful like three causes of disease: gas, bile, and phlegm. In terms of their dreadfulness they grew fast like an unattended disease. When they came to know that their father had attained the splendour by penance, they also commenced tough penance. Impressed by the severity of penance, Brahma arrived surrounded by gods. They demanded longevity, and victory over opponents. Brahma granted their wish and left.

Proud of the Brahma's blessings, they commenced torturing sages, and gods and continued disrupting the penance of sages. Once they appeared to Vishwakarma, and asked him to provide them cities like *amaravati* of *Indr*. Vishwakarma revealed to them the existing creation of Lanka over peak of *trikoot*. Soon Lanka became their headquarter.

Subsequently they got married to three daughters of Narmada, a female *gandharv* in the auspicious period of *uttaraphalguni nakshatr* (उत्तराफाल्गुनी). In course of time, Malyavan's

wife Sundari gave birth to seven sons: Vajrmushti, Virupash, Durmukh, Suptaghn, Ygyakop, Matt and Unmatt, and one daughter, Anala.

Sumali's wife Ketumati had eleven sons and four daughters. The sons were: Prahast, Akampan, Vikat, Kalikamukh, Dhumarksh, Dand, Suparshv, Sanhadi, Praghas, and Bhaskarn; the daughters were Raka, Pushpotakata, Kaikasi, and Kumbhinasi.

Mali had wife named Vasuda, and they produced Amal, Anil, Har and Sampathi who were ministers to Vibhishan.

With increased strength of the family, demons commenced a large scale torturing of sages and gods. They didn't allow the performance of oblations and penance.

### 7-6 Demons attacked gods (70 / 260)

Aggrieved by the continuous torture of demons, sages and gods collectively appealed to *Shiv*. Hearing their grievances, he advised them, "Sukesh is my blessed devotee, I can't harm his family. I advise you to pray *Narayan* who holds disc, conch and *srivats* (श्रीवत्स) icon over his chest."

The sages approached *Narayan* and offered their prayer as well as registered their grievances against the rising atrocities of demons. *Narayan* assured them to help, and thereafter, they left chanting his glory<sup>1</sup>.

Malyavan heard about the meeting of sages and gods to *Shiv* and, subsequently to *Narayan*. He narrated the entire incidents to his brothers Sumali and Mali. Malyavan narrated, "We are aware of the potential of *Naryan*. He had handled skilfully the end of Hirnyakashipu, Namuchi, Sanhalad, Kalnemi, Radhey, Yamalarjun, Shumbh, Nishumbh and others. It would be difficult for us to win him, if he has resolved to bring about our end."

Sumali and Mali were surprised to hear the words of Malyvan who was apparently afraid of *Narayan*. Both the brothers assured Malayvan about their potential, "We have performed penance, sacrifices and study of *ved*. We are not afraid of any power, let it be *Indr*, *Rudr*, *Naryan*, and *Yam*. We must pre-empt the efforts of gods and make an attack before they take any action.

The demons army riding chariots, horses, elephants, camels, boar, deer, snakes etc moved out to attack over gods. While they were moving towards the abode of gods they noticed bad omens: mountains shook, clouds rained blood and bones, jackals wailed, vultures spitting flashes hovered over demons, parrots and other sweet birds deserted

<sup>1</sup> Shlok 7-6-13, 7-6-22, 7-6-30 are worth referring. Sometimes the confusion persists about the different entity of *Narayan* (नारायण) than that of *Vishnu* (विष्णु). This is clarified by these shlok of Valmiki that they are one. शंख चक्र धरं देवं .....7-6-13; इत्युक्तास्ते सुराः सर्वे विष्णुना प्रभविष्णुना .....7-6-22; योऽसौ चक्रगदापाणिः पीतवासा जनार्दनः । हरिनारायणः श्रीमाञ्छरणं तं प्रपद्यथ .....7-6-30

Lanka, crows croaked, cats growled. Despite occurrences of all the bad signs, the demons were not deterred.

The messenger of gods informed *Narayan* about the impending attack of demons. Besides his eternal disc, conch, and mace, he equipped himself with sword perched to his waist, bow and quivers hanging from his shoulders. Riding his mount *garud*, he stormed over the demons' army. With the lashes of flying wing of *garud*, the chariots, elephants and others were severely destabilised. Observing his arrival, the demons collectively charged their attack over him.

### 7-7 Demons retreated (55 / 315)

Demons attack was like rains over the *Narayan* mountain. Their arrows and weapons were lost in him as if the beings have entered his body during the dissolution of the universe. They had surrounded him so closely that closed air circulation created a feeling of the still (*kumbhak* कुम्भक) stage of *pranayam* (प्राणायाम) for him. Their concerted attack gave an impression as if fish had charged attack over the ocean<sup>2</sup> (7-7-7).

Answering their charges, *Narayan* shot stream of shafts from his *sharang* bow causing a large scale carnage. Following that he blew the *panchjanya* conch producing so terrifying sound that demons had a retreat towards Lanka. They were scared as elephants by a lion, tigers by an elephant, leopards by a tiger, dogs by a leopard, cats by a dog, snakes by a cat, and rats by a snake.

Seeing the pitiable condition of demons army, Sumali commenced shooting of shafts over *Naryan*, and encouraged by his performance, the demons stopped the retreat. *Narayn* appeared behind the cover of showering shafts, as if hidden sun moved behind a pall of fog. To counter his assault, *Narayan* killed his charioteer, and in absence of the driving whip, the horses became wild. Sumali was being dragged by the horses aimlessly from one place to another.

In the meanwhile, Mali rushed in support of Sumali, and picked up the combat by showering of arrows over *Narayan*. The demon's arrows were lost over him, as if birds entered the hole<sup>3</sup> of the *kronch* mountain. To contain his charge, *Narayan* cut down his crown, flag, bow and killed the horses. Mali jumped down over ground holding mace in his hand. He made a heavy punch over the head of *garud*, which almost turned him around. This caused a situation in which *Narayan* had his back towards the enemy. The demon made a roaring laugh humiliating him over the battle ground. *Narayan* charged his infallible disc which cut down the Mali's head off his body.

When Mali was dead, his other two brothers, Sumali and Malyavan retreated fast towards Lanka. They were followed by the demons army, and *Narayan's* continued

<sup>2</sup> *Valmiki* is fond of quoting appropriate comparisons.

<sup>3</sup> Very often, *Valmiki* uses this comparison which is related to the legend of *karitikeya*.

chasing them causing huge loss of lives. *Narayan* was seen like lord *Nrusinha*<sup>4</sup> (7-7-52 पुराणसिंहेन विमर्दितानाम् ) crushing the scores of elephants. In the meanwhile *garud* had also regained his normalcy, and his wings resumed causing flutter among the retreating army of demons.

### 7-8 Demons fled to the netherworld (29 / 344)

Malyavan condemned *Narayan* for maintaining the attack over retreating army, “O, Possessor of disc and conch! You don’t seem to be aware of the rule of conduct in a battle. Scriptures condemn to attack over retreating army from behind. Let me stand and face you now.”

*Narayan* mentioned, “I am committed to gods for elimination of those who disturb the practices of *ygya* and fire oblations. To meet my objective I have to ignore the scriptural provisions you have mentioned.”

Consequently, *Narayan* and Malyavan were engaged in a fierce battle. The demon charged a deadly *shakti* (sharp pestle) over *Narayan* and that entered his chest. He took out the *shakti* from his chest, and hurled it back over the demon. Pounding *shakti*, broke the shield over the chest of the demon, and he had a spell of swoon. Recovering soon, the demon charged another iron club over his chest, and in quick succession pounded his chest with his fist. Continuing his aggression, the demon punched heavily over *garud*. Enraged *garud*, swung his wing so heavily that the demon was thrown away like a dry leaf by a storm. Afraid of this, Sumali and Malyavan retreated with their army to Lanka.

Subsequently, such incidents were repeated several times and the demons were forced to take retreat. Later, demons deserted Lanka and sought shelter in the netherworld. In the meanwhile *Kuber* took possession of Lanka.

Narrating the legend so far, *Agastya* mentioned, “Those demons were much mightier than Ravan, and many of them were killed, and the rest were forced out of Lanka by the possessor of conch and disc, Vishnu. Ram! You being the same four handed<sup>5</sup> *Narayan*, now incarnated in this form had eliminated Ravan.”

### 7-9 Ravan and his brothers (48 / 392)

Sumali while staying in the netherworld was worried about the marriage of his daughter, Kaikasi (कैकसी). He thought, “The daughter should be married to a suitable person, possessed with matching qualities of the girl. The marriage is a gift of daughter to some

<sup>4</sup> Valmiki has frequently quoted Trivikram ( त्रिविक्रम ), and Upendra ( ऊपेन्द्र ). The comparison with Nrusimha ( नृसिंह ) incarnation has appeared for the first time.

<sup>5</sup> 7-8-26 भगवान् नारायणो देवश्चतुर्बाहुः सनातनः । राक्षसान् हन्तुमुत्पन्नो ह्यजय्यः प्रभुरव्ययः । ।

able groom, and this must be performed at the earliest. Father has the responsibility of selecting a groom.” Reflecting thus, when he wandered over earth, he saw Kuber moving towards his parents. He was impressed by his personality and coming back to his daughter he mentioned, “Kuber, has a charming personality and splendid status. He is son of Vishrava. If you agree, I would advise you to impress Vishrava, and beget children from him as influential as Kuber.”

Having this in mind, Kaikasi, arrived at Vishrava’s place in the evening when he was busy in performing the ritual of oblation in fire. She saw, “Oblation square had flames of three<sup>6</sup> types of fire. Vishrava looked like the fourth brilliant flame.” Taking an appropriate place, she stood on a side. When Vishrava had a look at her, he enquired, “Who are you, and why did you come to me?” She replied with folded hands, “I am here in your service under the command of my father. My name is Kaikasi. The rest I would request you to know by power of your penance.” The sage drew into meditation, and knew all about her. He spoke to her, “You have come to me with an intention to be blessed with a son. You have expressed your desire in the evening time, therefore you will get sons mighty but cruel like demons.” Afraid of his prediction, she fell on his feet and prayed for righteous and a religious son. He assured that the youngest son would be a religious person matching with the status of the heritage.

Subsequently she gave birth to a child with ten heads, twenty hands, wide chin, shining hair and jet black complexion. At the time of his birth bad omens<sup>7</sup> were observed. Looking at his ten heads, Vishrava named him Dashagriv (दशग्रीव). Later, Dashagriv’s brother Kumbhakarn was born. Before the birth of the youngest brother Vibhishan, sister Surpanakha was born. When Vibhishan was born, shower of flowers took place, and at the same time sweet sounds of celestial drums were heard.

Dashagriv and Kumbhakarn were very cruel, and for sages they proved rogues, obstructing their performances. Kumbhakarn was never able to satiate his hunger, and he used to devour the sages alive. Vibhishan was different from them, and his life style was that of a righteous person.

Once Kuber, arrived at Vishrava’s place in *pushpak*. Kaikasi, drawing the attention of Dashagriv spoke to him, “How splendorous and impressive is Kuber! You should also earn similar status and splendour.”

Ravan assured her to fulfil her desire, and with this aim in mind, he along with his brothers moved to *Gokarn* for penance.

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<sup>6</sup> गार्हपत्य आहवनीय दक्षिणाग्नि

<sup>7</sup> Fire flashes from jackals mouth, vultures giving round, clouds raining blood with thunder, quaking earth, stormy wind, and fall of comets.



### 7-10 Boons to Ravan (49 / 441)

All the three brothers undertook severe penance for ten thousand years. With his firm resolve, Kumbhakarn maintained a righteous routine. He used to spend his summer days amidst burning fire. During rains, he weathered heavy shower under open sky. During winter, he stayed immersed in cold water.

Vibhishan was engaged in austere routine, and stood over one leg for five thousand years. Celestial dancers showered flowers over him. His next five thousand years were spent in praying sun keeping his folded hands raised with his face looking upward.

Ravan had a peculiar style of penance. He maintained fast for ten thousand years. At the end of every one thousand year, he offered his one head in fire. At the end of ten thousand years, when he was about to offer his tenth head to fire god, Brahma appeared and dissuaded him in doing so.

Brahma enquired, "What wishes you have. Tell me I would fulfil them." Ravan bowing respectfully to Brahma, sought the life of immortality. He spoke, "There is no enemy like death, and therefore make me ever alive." Brahma explained to him, "This type of boon keeping you ever alive is not feasible." Ravan with folded hands, then submitted, "Make me immortal against *garud*, *sankes*, *yaksh*, demons, and gods. I am not bothered about the other creatures. As regards humans they are insignificant like grass to me." Brahma granted him what he wished, and at the same time mentioned, "You will regain the original ten heads. You will also possess power of assuming any guise you wish to have."

Coming to Vibhishan Brahma enquired his wishes. Vibhishan offering prayer and respectful salutation, mentioned, "Your presence and glimpse are boons for me. Allow me to stabilise my mind in righteous performances. Even during perilous hours my mind should not waver from moral conducts. I should be endowed with the knowledge of *brahmasht*. I understand, nothing is impossible for those who adhere to righteousness." Brahma was glad to hear his submission, "Even though born in the demon's family, you are endowed with superb qualities of a righteous person. I grant your wishes, and at the same time make you immortal."

When Brahma moved to Kumbhakarn, gods pleaded, "No special power should be conferred upon him. He is monstrous and is capable of devouring alive several beings. The other day, he ate alive seven celestial dancers, ten attendants of Indr, and host of sages and humans." Brahma invoked the presence of *godess* Sarswati over his tongue and Kumbhakarn sought, "Allow me sound slumber for years." Brhama granting him to be so, left the place with gods.

Later, when the influence of Sarswati was over, Kumbhakarn repented, "I wonder, how did I seek such insignificant boon from Brahma. It must be the tricks of gods". He felt sorry about his solicitation to Brahma. However, all the three brothers, later retired in forest for relaxation.



### 7-11 Ravan possessed Lanka (52 / 493)

The news of boons to Ravan reached the netherworld. Sumali was proud of his grandchildren and with four ministers Mareech, Prahast, Virupaksh and Mahodar he came to felicitate them. While with Dashagriv he advised him, "Lanka was earlier in our possession. Due to fear of frequent persecution of Vishnu, we took refuge in netherworld. Subsequently *Kuber* took the possession of the city, and now it has become his property. You have been endowed mighty potential and immunity against gods, it is proper time to grab the city for the demons. You are now our master and our wellbeing is in your hands."

Dashagriv didn't approve the advice offered by Sumali, "Kuber is my elder brother and he is respectable to me. You shouldn't talk so about him." Sumali withdrew quietly. When some substantial time rolled out, Prahast once tried to convince Dashagriv politely, "Diti and Aditi, two wives of Kashyap produced gods and demons respectively. Earlier the earth was in possession of demons. Later, *Vishnu* interfered and gods have become the master of earth. We have been dispossessed from earth. Such things of using force have been initiated by gods. Therefore, the advice of Sumali to you should be considered once again."

Dashagriv was pleased with the advice of Prahast and he sent him as messenger to *Kuber*. As desired by Dashagriv, Prahast went to Kuber and conveyed him the message of Dashagriv, "This city of Lanka was earlier possessed by Sumali and other demons. We would appreciate if you vacate Lanka for demons." Kuber advised Prahast, "I have been here when it was deserted. My father sent me here to stay. Subsequently, on my initiative people settled here peacefully. You may convey to Dashagriv that all my possession is his possession also. He is welcome to avail them freely."

Saying thus to Prahast, Kuber went to father Vishrava, and narrated the incident. Vishrava told him, "Dashagriv had earlier mentioned this to me also. Then I rejected his claim, and rebuked him angrily, saying that such claims would lead to his downfall. Now I think, because of earning boon he has become conceited. My curse would have also become effective, and he is possessed by low and selfish desire. Better vacate Lanka and settle over Kailas. Here at Kailas, several other gods and celestial beings stay happily. The natural resources of river Mandakini adds to its grandeur."

As desired by his father, Kuber vacated the city with his family, belongings and people. Subsequently, Prahast informed Dashagriv about the availability of Lanka for *Kuber* had vacated the city for good. Dashagriv entered the city with other demons, and he was crowned their king. Soon Lanka came in the possession of demons.

Kuber, shifting to Kailas settled a new city called Alakapuri, as grand as Amaravati of Indr.

### 7-12 Birth of Meghanad (32 / 525)

In course of time, Ravan married his sister Surpanakha to Vidyujihva, son of Kalaka. Later, once he was on a hunting mission in forest and there he met Maya (मय) with a girl. He enquired their identity. Maya replied, "Earlier Sachi, daughter of the demon Pulom, was gifted to Indr. In similar way, gods gifted me Hema, a renowned celestial dancer. She stayed with me for long, in a city, I specially built of gold for her comfort. She brought forth one daughter, called Mandodari, and two sons Mayavi and Dundubhi. This girl with me is my daughter, and I am looking for a match for her alliance."

Completing his details, when Maya enquired his details, Dashagriv mentioned, " I am Dashagriv son of Vishrva. My father is son of Pulastya, and he is direct third generation from Brahma."

Maya knew about curse of Vishrava about his cruelty, but impressed by his rich heritage, he proposed the marriage of Mandodari to him. Dashagriv agreed to his proposal, and in presence of fire god the marriage was solemnised. Dashagriv came back with his wife to Lanka. Subsequently he arranged marriage of Kumbhakarn to Vajrajwala, granddaughter of demon king Bali. Vibhishan was married to Sarama, daughter of a saintly *gandharv* Shailush. She was born on the bank of Mansarovar ( a great lake). Due to onset of rainy season, the lake water overflowed, and her mother asked the lake not to overtop the bank. Her wish was in Sanskrit, सरो मा वर्धयस्व O, lake! Don't overflow. This caused her name सरसा<sup>8</sup>.

All the brothers lead a happy conjugal life in Lanka. Subsequently, Mandodari gave birth to a male child who made a thunderous sound of cloud when he was born. Pleased by his thunder, Ravan called him Meghanad.

### 7-13 Ravan killed Kuber's messenger (41 / 566)

Kumbhakarn once felt the prevalence of Brahma's words. He had an intense feeling to sleep, and he asked Ravan to arrange for his safe sleeping place. On command of Ravan, one *yojan* wide and two *yojan* long, grand fort was built. All sorts of luxurious provisions including fixing of precious gems were made. Kumbhakarn entered the slumber palace and had a sound sleep for thousands of years. In the meanwhile, Ravan caused atrocities over sages and gods, and earned their displeasure.

Kuber had undertaken a special penance of *raudr vrat* on the Himalayas. One morning he could feel the presence of *Shiv* and *Parvati* in the vicinity. Out of curiosity, he took a partial glance from the corner of his left eye. He could see a rare form of goddess *Parvati* and that burnt his left eye. His right eye was also filled with dust and it turned pale. Thereafter he concentrated over his penance

<sup>8</sup> Her name had appeared consoling Sita in 6-33 (*yuddh kand, sarg 33*) when Ravan tried to scare Sita showing fake head of Ram.

and completed it in eight hundred years. Pleased over his performance, *Shiv* appeared and spoke to him in sweet words, “Only two persons, you and me have performed this penance. I am highly pleased by your steadfastness. Let us now become friends. Earlier, because of *Parvati*, you had lost your one eye and the other had become pale, therefore, you will be called by a new name Ekashipingla also.”

Saying thus *Shiv* left, and *Kuber* also came to his abode in *Alakapuri*. He learnt about the misdeeds of Ravan of obstructing the penance, and sacrifices of sages and gods. In this regard, he sent a messenger to Ravan, advising him to mend his ways and adopt righteous conduct. The messenger arriving at Lanka, first met Vibhishan and conveyed his intention of visit. Vibhishan took him to Ravan in his royal court. The messenger hailed the victory of the demon king, and stood on a side. Subsequently he submitted the message of Kuber, “O, Demon king, Dashagrivi! I was out for long time on a penance. Coming back I learnt about your increasing atrocities over sages and gods. They might plan to teach you a lesson. Therefore it is high time you should improve your image worthy of our respected heritage.”

Ravan became angry to hear his message, and pulling his sword killed the messenger. The demons feasted upon the messenger’s body. After that, Ravan made a preparation to attack over Kuber’s abode. Invoking the auspiciousness, through chanting of *swastivachan* स्वस्तिवाचन, he rode the chariot.

#### **7-14 Ravan defeated yaksh (30 /596)**

Ravan arrived in Alakapuri, accompanied by six warriors Mahodar, Prahast, Marich, Shuk, Saran, and Dhumraksh. His arrival was intimated to Kuber that Ravan had arrived with an intention to attack over the Alakapuri. Kuber commanded *yaksh* army to face him boldly. Fierce fighting took place and *yaksh* suffered massive casualty. Kuber sent more reinforcement lead by Sanyodhkantak. Marich was grievously injured by Sanyodhkantak, and was thrown down the mountain. Later when he recovered, the *yaksh* chief couldn’t face him. Ravan also entered into the main gate of the city despite the warning of Suryabhanu, the guard on duty. Enraged by his trespassing, the guard pounded a pole over him, and Ravan bled like a mountain streaming with *moorum* mixed water. His boon of Brahma worked and he was safe against all attacks. Killing the guard Ravan entered deep inside the city.

#### **7-15 Ravan grabbed pushpak (44 / 640)**

Having come to know the casualty of *yaksh*, Kuber sent Manibhadr with four thousand army. His army was destroyed by Prahast, Mahodar and Marich. Subsequently,

Manibhadr punched a pestle over the chest of Dhumraksh, but he was safe. In the immediate succession, Manibhadr, charged his mace over the demon's head, and he fell over ground soaked in blood. Seeing Dhumraksh over ground, Ravan stormed over Manibhadr. Manibhadr charged three pestles over him, but Ravan was safe. Continuing his attack, Ravan punched over his head, that caused his crown shifting sideways. Thereafter, Manibhadr quit the ground carrying his oblique crown which caused him to be called *Parshvamauli* also.

In the meanwhile, Kuber arrived there accompanied by his two ministers Shukr, and Prausthpad. Two gods of wealth, Shankh and Padm were also with him. Aggrieved by the impudence of Ravan he rebuked him, "Today you don't listen to my words, but soon your sins will reap the consequences. Misdeeds always invite trouble where as the act adhering moral conduct yield beneficial results." Warning him in several ways, Kuber himself took the command of fight. He used his mace to injure the demon warriors and they couldn't face him any longer. Subsequently he charged his mace over Ravan, but nothing happened to him. Soon both were engaged in a fierce fighting.

The *agni astr* of Kuber was countered by *Varun astr* of Ravan. Thereafter resorting to sorcery, Ravan appeared in several deceptive forms of tiger, boar, cloud, tree, *yaksh*, sea, and monster. Taking advantage of his disguise, he pounded his mace over the head of Kuber. He fell unconscious over ground, and he was picked by other gods and taken to the *nandan van* where he recovered some time later.

In the meanwhile Ravan grabbed his *pushpak* which was a celestial aerial chariot capable of flying as per wish of the person on board. It was decorated with precious gems and had provision of automatic temperature control to suit the comfort of a given season. Celestial trees provided fruits in all seasons planted inside the chariot. It has expanding accommodation capacity as per strength of the number of passengers on board. Proud of his victory Ravan riding *pushpak* arrived in Lanka.

### 7-16 Shankar christened him Ravan (49 / 689)

Once, Ravan happened to pass over a mountain but the *pushpak* couldn't cross beyond a given line. He was surprised and his ministers wondered whether *pushpak* wanted Kuber's presence for its effective operation. In the meanwhile, Nandishwar, attendant of *Shankar* appeared and warned him, "Leave this place. None of the gods, *yaksh*, and celestial beings could cross beyond this line. The zone ahead is reserved for pastime of *Shankar*."

Enraged Ravan burst out, "Who is this Shankar and what is his pastime ?" Saying that he arrived at the foot of the mountain. He found Nandi standing there, like a second Shankar, with trident in his hand, but his face took after a monkey. Ravan ridiculed over his face, and laughed derisively. That caused Nandi to curse him, "Your race including you will end due to attack of mighty monkeys of my stature. They will have forms of mountains and using their dreadful nails and teeth, they will bring about the end of demons. Although I am capable of eliminating you but I spare your life now."

Ravan ignored the words of Nandi and coming to the foot of the mountain he announced, "Due to this mountain *pushpak* didn't move forward. Let me uproot this now." Saying that when he used his arms to lift the mountain, it moved from its position. This scared the attendants of *Shankar*, and *Parvati* also felt uncomfortable. Shankar immediately pressed down the mountain with toe of his foot. Ravan's arms were entrapped below the mountain and he produced a terrific sound. The beings of the earth under panic wept with tears in their eyes.

Finding no way out, his ministers advised Ravan to pray Shankar. Ravan commenced his prayer and reciting glory to Shankar. He was kept in that situation for one thousand years, but he continued his prayer without break. Pleased by his valour, Shankar released his trap, and asked for boon. Ravan demanded, "Brahma had given me long life and immunity against gods and celestial beings. Since his boon, substantial years have passed and that has reduced my age by that amount of time. I pray you to renew the elapsed life, and I also seek one divine weapon from you."

Hearing his demand Shankar spoke to him, "Your elapsed years are now recovered". Gifting him a brilliant sword called *Chandrahast*, he again spoke to him, "You have also to be careful in giving due honour to this sword. If felt neglected, it will come back to me. From today you will be known by a new name Ravan, because your terrific sound has caused other beings to weep in panic."

Thereafter, strengthened by Shankar's blessings, his cruelty assumed a larger proportion. He roamed around the three worlds, and established his victory grounding the opponents down to dust.

### 7-17 Curse of Vedvati (44 / 733)

Ravan was wandering once over the Himalayas. He saw a beautiful girl clad in an ascetic robe of deer skin. She was busy in meditation. Under impulse of lust, he went near the girl and asked her identity. She narrated her story, "My father Kushidhwaj, son of Bruhaspati, was greatly involved in study and recitation of *ved*. I am considered to be her daughter out of *vedic* recitation. My name is Vedvati. Coming of age, several celestials and persons of royal heritage sought my hands in marriage. My father declined their solicitation, and he had a resolve that I should be married to lord Vishnu only. Getting angry over my father, the demon king Shambhu, killed him. My mother also followed the suite, and rose to the pyre of my father. Thereafter I resolved to fulfil the wish of my father and undertook the penance here."

Ravan was overwhelmed by her beauty, and coming down from *pushpak*, he asked her to become his life partner. He also mentioned, "Who is this Vishnu? I am the sovereign master of the earth, and nobody will provide you better honour and comfort than I can provide." She countered his plea, "Lord Vishnu is the sole sovereign of the universe. The universe bows down over his feet. None can dare ignore him as you do." Ravan couldn't wait further, and he held her hair. She was so aggrieved that from the power of the penance, she used her hand as a sharp sword, and cut off the hair, releasing herself

from the grip of the Ravan's hands. She also mentioned, "Although I can burn you to ashes, but I won't spoil my penance. I now would enter fire, but I curse you that your end will come because of me when I am born again." Saying that she offered herself to fire, and flowers showered around her from sky.

In the next birth she was born over a lotus, and Ravan picked her up as a nascent child, and brought her to his palace. The astrologers warned Ravan, "The child has inimical signs against you. She should not be reared up in the palace." Ravan preferred to discard the child.

The same child, appeared from the ploughshare when Janak tilled the land under the ritual of a *ygya*. As fire appears in a *ygya*, she also appeared from the surface of the earth. Subsequently, she became known as Sita.

### **7-18 Ravan defeated Marutt (36 / 769)**

While moving over earth riding *pushpak*, Ravan once arrived in the country of Ushirbij. The king of the country Marutt was engaged in *maheshwar ygya*. In presence of gods, Samvart, brother of Bruhaspati, conducted the *ygya* as chief priest. Scared by the presence of Ravan, gods assumed the body of birds: Indra as peacock, Yam as crow, Varun as royal swan, and Kuber as *girgit (chameleon)*.

Coming to Marutt, Ravan asked, "Either fight with me or say you are defeated." When the king enquired his identity, he laughed and mentioned, "I am younger brother of Kuber. This *pushpak* I have grabbed from him." Condemning his impudence the king said, "My arrows would soon dispatch you to the death world."

Samvart, interfering mentioned to the king, "For you *maheshwar ygya* is of utmost priority, and you need to continue with this rather divert your attention. While resolved for this *ygya* you need not lose your temper. If the *ygya* remains inconclusive, it will cause immense harm to your wellbeing." Consenting to Samvart's advice, Marutt withdrew, and Shuk, demon minister of Ravan, blew the victory conch in favour of Ravan. The demon Ravan, killed and devoured the sages who had arrived in *ygya*. He left riding *pushpak*.

After his departure, gods regained their original form and blessed the birds. *Indr* blessing to peacock said, "Your blue body shall now be made more attractive by marks of my thousand eyes over the wings. You are now free from the fear of snakes. During rains you will attain great pleasure in looking at the clouds in the sky."

*Yam* blessed crow, "If not killed by anyone you will not die of any disease. The oblation of food and cereals offered by those on earth meant for their dead forefathers will be received through your satisfaction."

*Varun* blessed royal swan, "The front edge of your wings is blue, and the portion of the body between the wings is of grass colour. From today your entire body shall be pleasing white."

Kuber blessed **girgit** to convert from black to golden complexion.

### **7-19 Dying Anaranya cursed Ravan (32 / 801)**

Ravan had made a general announcement to the kings on earth, "Either fight with me or accept defeat." Several kings Dushyant, Surath, Gadhi, Gaya, Pururava and others had quietly accepted their defeat. Getting elated by his wide spread sovereignty, he arrived in Ayodhya, and asked the king Anaranya to either fight or surrender. The king had earlier heard about him, and therefore he had gathered huge army to face Ravan. He readily accepted his challenge. In the contingent of forces of Anaranya, there were one hundred thousand cavalry, ten thousand elephants, several thousand chariots, and scores of infantry. In the battle, the king's army suffered great casualty. Finally the king himself arrived over the battle ground, and defeated the demon ministers Marich, Shuk, Saran and Prahast.

Fighting Ravan, the king shot eight hundred arrows over him, but he didn't suffer from any injury. Answering his charges, Ravan punched a slap, and the king fell down from his chariot. While dying the king spoke to Ravan, "Everything takes place as ordained, and the same is applicable to me also. But before dying I curse you. Ram, one of my descendants, will end your life."

### **7-20 Narad provoked Ravan (33 / 834)**

It so happened that Ravan once saw Narad passing through the sky route. When he offered his respects to him, Narad spoke, "I am pleased by your valour and victory. If you prefer, I would like to give you one advice. Your performance at earth among the mortal humans is noteworthy, but you may think about this. These humans are mortal and are afflicted by disease and death. They can never be match to your stature, and therefore winning them who are already dead and defeated may not add to your glory. I would advise to secure your victory over the god of death, Yam. He is the cause of death, and if you have him in your control, you will really be sovereign in the universe."

Hearing Narad, Ravan spoke, "I praise your advice, but now I am going to netherworld, and after attaining my victory over them, I would prefer to churn ocean to secure nectar."

Narad mentioned, "The route you have adopted now is not the convenient route of the netherworld. Rather, this route passes through the circuitous and complex *yam lok* ." Ravan accepted his advice and mentioned, "Now I would first tackle Yam, the son of sun. The master of death of others shall meet his death today."

Saying thus Ravan moved to the south to secure victory over Yam. Narad grew a little curious and wanted to see the interesting battle between Ravan and Yam.

**7-21 Ravan attacked Yam (46 / 880)**

Before arrival of Ravn, Narad met Yam, who in presence of fire god, was busy in issuing decree to the deceased. After being greeted, Narad intimated him about the impending attack of Ravan.

Soon pushapak riding Ravan arrived in *yamllok*, and took a look at the prevailing scene of torture and reward. He also saw the attendants and huge army of Yam. He could then notice how people passed though severe penalty of *raurava narak* and other painful tortures. Those who had gifted land, house and cereals over earth, were provided with the similar comfort after their death.

Seeing all over, Ravan interfered in the tortures being afflicted over the deceased ones. When he released some of those who were prisoner to the hell, attendants of *yam* became furious. They attacked over Ravan. Gradually the skirmishes turned into a holocaust. Large portion of the army of *yam* met sever casualty. Ravan also suffered from severe injuries. His shield was broken, and his body was soaked in blood. Due to boon of Brahma, the damage caused to the *pushpak* was quickly repaired on its own.

Subsequently Ravan charged *pashupat astr*. This deadly weapon caused great loss of *yam* army, and they fell as if dry leaves were burnt by fire in summer. Ravan along with his ministers made a winsome uproarious sound.

**7-22 Victorious Ravan left Yamlok (51 / 931)**

Hearing the uproars of demons, Yam rushed himself to the battle ground. He was riding a chariot, and inside the chariot, on his sides *kaldand* and *kalpash* accompanied him. He was lead by *mrityu*. Demons were panicked by the presence of *mrityu* and they deserted the ground. *Yam* showered several *shakti* over Ravan, and he was not able to counter them. His condition became pitiable. Mustering his mettle, Ravan picked up his attack. He charged four arrows over *mrityu*, and injured the horses by seven shafts. In quick succession he showered thousands of arrows over Yam hurting him grievously.

Soon *mrityu* and *kal* sought his permission to eliminate Ravan. Ignoring their solicitation, Yam himself picked up his deadliest weapon *kaldand*. The universe trembled, and gods were gripped with fear. Yam was about to hurl the *kaldand* that Brahma appeared and intervened, "I have blessed Ravan immortality against gods. This *kaldand* is also my creation. It is the ultimate weapon, and once hurled it can eliminate the entire universe. Honour my words, and don't kill him." Yam respected Brahma and withdrew his weapon. Thereafter, he spoke, "If he has been made immortal against gods, then this battle is futile." Saying thus he disappeared along with his chariot.

Ravan, ultimately emerged victorious; aboard *pushpak*, he happily left *yamllok*.



### 7-23 Ravan defeated sons of Varun (54 / 985)

When he left *yamlok*, his ministers who were brutally injured by Yam, joined him with blood soaked body. Consoling, Ravan took them over *Pushpak* and moved towards the netherworld.

Arriving in Bhogpuri, he subjugated *nag*. When he entered Manimayapuri, he challenged monstrous residents of that place who were known as *nivatkavach*. They were also blessed by Brahma. Soon fierce fighting took place between Ravan and those *nivatkavach*. They were engaged in fighting for over one year without any conclusion. Brahma ultimately arrived, and advised *nivatkavach* to forge friendship with Ravan. He mentioned, "Both of you are blessed by me for your immortality, therefore, better become friends of each other."

The friendship was established in presence of fire god. Ravan receiving their warm honour, stayed for over year. During his stay he learnt skill of sorcery from them.

Further roaming around with an intention to locate the abode of *Varun*, Ravan happened to pass through the city of Ashma inhabited by valorous *kalkeya* demons. He killed those demons, and when his brother-in-law Vidyujihav (husband of Surpanakha) wanted to eliminate him using his licking tongue, he cut him in two pieces by his sword.

Moving forward he located the white shining abode of *Varun*. Arriving at the palace, he first met *surabhi*, the celestial cow. Incessantly pouring milk from her udder, has made the *ksheersagar* (क्षीरसागर) **7-23-21**. Divine mount *nandi* (*maha brushabh*) of *Mahadev*, is son of *surbhi*. Moon being a product of *ksheersagar*, is also in the lineage of *suabhi*. Ravan first made a respectful round of *surbhi*, and thereafter, he watched the grandeur of *Varun*'s abode. It was beautifully decorated, and streaming natural springs had further enhanced its splendour. Subsequently, Ravan asked the guard, "Intimate my arrival to *Varun*. He will either fight with me, or with folded hands he may surrender to me."

Hearing Ravan's message, the sons and grandsons of *Varun* stormed over him. They were lead by Gau and Pushkar. Hair raising fight took place between demons and army of *Varun*. Mighty ministers of Ravan routed the opponents. Due to heavy pounding of demons, sons of *Varun* were also made unconscious. Regaining their consciousness they realised that Ravan was riding *pushpak*, and therefore, they also came riding brilliant aerial chariot. They made lethal attack humiliating Ravan to withdraw. Feeling victorious they made roaring sound. Mahodar, demon minister of Ravan, couldn't tolerate the humiliation of Ravan, and he resumed the combat with a mace. The fast footed horses of their chariot were killed by Mahodar. Ravan also resumed the combat, and commenced showering arrows over them. Soon they were made unconscious, and their attendants took them away from the battle ground. Ravan made a victorious sound, and asked them to send *Varun* to face him.

Prabhas, the minister of *Varun*, came out and spoke to Ravan, “*Varun* has gone to attend a musical consort at Brahma’s place. He is not available, and his army has already been routed by you.” Victorious Ravan left the abode of *Varun*.

### 7-24 Surpanakha with Khar in Dandakaranya (42 / 1027)

While coming back, Ravan forcibly kidnapped several women from the family of kings, sages, *gandharv* and *yaksh*. They were all aboard with him in *pushpak*. Their eyes welled tears causing flood over *pushpak*. Throughout the route, they cursed Ravan, “Forceful abduction of other’s wives lead to annihilation; a woman will be cause of your ultimate end.” Their curse was greeted by celestial shower of flowers and sound of drums (7-24-21).

When Ravan landed in Lanka, his sister Surpanakha welcome him with lamenting words tearful eyes. She cried, “While killing *kalkeya* demons, you killed my husband also. Being elder you are like my father. If you can’t provide protection to me, what shall happen to my fate.” Ravan consoled her, “I lost my reasons, and to secure victory I continued charging weapons. The tragedy has occurred in ignorance and by mistake.”

To keep Surpanakha pleased, he sent her with Khar to Dandakarnya. They were accompanied by fourteen thousand dreadful demons. Ravan assured, “Your cousin brother Khar would work under your commands, and he will ensure your pleasant living.”

### 7-25 Successful ygya of Meghanad (52/ 1052)

After dispatching Khar to Janasthan, Ravan came on strolling in Nikumbhila grove. He noticed Meghanad performing ygya there. Getting close to him he enquired as what was he doing. *Shukracharya* who the chief priest spoke to Ravan, “Meghanad is on vow of silence now. He has successfully completed seven ygya: *agnishtom*, *ashvamedh*, *bahusuvanak*, *rajsuya*, *gomedh*, *vaishnav*, and *maheshvar*. On completion of the last ygya, he has been blessed with one divine chariot, *tamasi* art of sorcery, two quivers full of arrows, and a strong bow. Using *tamasi* he would be able to hide himself surrounded by dense fog invisible to others. Soon he would be concluding ygya and would seek your blessings.”

On conclusion Ravan blessed him, but criticized also for appeasing enemy *Indr* and other gods through oblations to them. He later accompanied by them, came to *pushpak* and sought their help in taking down the wailing women. Vibhishan was also present there, and he criticized Ravan for his immoral act of kidnapping others wives. He mentioned, “Due to your sin, our cousin sister *Kumbhinasi* had been abducted by a demon Madhu from our palace. She is daughter of Malyavan’s daughter, cousin sister of our mother. While you were away, I was busy in my penance deep in water, Kumbhakarn was sleeping, and Meghanad was on his mission of ygya. In the meanwhile Madhu arrived and forcefully took her away.”

Taking support of Meghanad, Ravan made a move to take revenge from Madhu. When he arrived at his place, he couldn’t see him, but his sister Kumbhinasi was present. She

appealed to Ravan to spare the life of her husband Madhu. Ravan consented, and sought Madhu's help in charging attack over gods in heaven. Madhu appeared and offered respectful greetings to Ravan. Staying there for a night, Ravan moved out in the morning to gods abode. On way, in the evening, he halted at *Kailas* near *kurber's* abode.

### 7-26 Nalkubar cursed Ravan (60 / 1112)

While the army was sleeping, Ravan was awake watching the grand natural scene of the night, "Sweet music and songs were coming from abode of *kuber*. *Vidyadhar* and *kinnar* were out in the moonlit night with their charming consorts. The cool air carried sweet fragrance." Ravan was seized with lustful thoughts. Subsequently he saw, Rambha, a charming celestial dancers passing nearby. Obstruction her way, he sought her favour to spend her night with him. She was puzzled and submitted to him, "I love Nalkubar, son of *kuber*, and I am going to meet her tonight. I am therefore your daughter-in-law. Scriptures prohibit such acts which you intend now." Ravan rejected her pleading, "The celestial dancers don't belong to a specific person. You are not married to anybody." Subsequently he raped her.

Pale and sad Rambha, coming to Nalkubar narrated the entire incident. He meditated for a while and saw what had happened on way to Rambha. He was seized with anger, and taking water in palm, he sanctified his organs with touch of that holy water. Subsequently, he cursed Ravan, "Henceforth, if he forcibly enjoys the association of women, he will drop dead by his head falling into seven pieces." To honour his curse, heavens showered flowers and celestial drums produced sweet notes (7-26-56). When Ravan learnt about the curse, he abjured rape with unwilling women. The chaste women imprisoned in his palace, rejoiced the curse.

### 7-27 Sumali killed (52/ 1164)

When Ravan moved towards the gods' abode intending to humiliate them on battle ground, Indr summoned the support of *vasu*, *marudgana* and other gods. Scared of Ravan, he hastily approached Vishnu, "You had helped us in the past. Now Ravan is coming to make attack on us. He has become immortal and invincible by the blessing of Brahma. To honour Brahma's words had become our responsibility. With your active support we had earlier defeated Namuchi, Bali, Vrutasur, Narak, Shambar and others. I seek your guidance for you can devise some way out."

Chanting his glory Indr mentioned, "You are supreme among gods and refuge to all of us. You are eternal universal spirit *Narayan*, and from your navel lotus has emerged as a genesis of the entire creation. It is you who established the three worlds and made me chief of gods."

[Note:](#)

[Shlok 10 and 11 of this sarg 27 of Uttar kand, suggest that universal spirit and supreme among gods has one another name Vishnu also. This means, among trinity of gods, when He is referred to as in-charge of nourishment to the beings and universe, he is called Vishnu. Otherwise in His](#)

[entirety, he is \*Narayan\*, and for the sake of performance of some feats for overall wellbeing of the universe, He assumes the form of \*Vishnu\*. \*Narayan\* therefore simultaneously has dual and distinct role of supreme spirit, as well as that of \*Vishnu\*.](#)

[ॐ हि नारायणः श्रीमान् पद्मनाभः सनातनः । त्वय्येमे स्थापिता लोकाः शक्रश्चाहं सुरेश्वरः । / 7-27-11](#)

Further, *Indr* sought his interference, “Equipped with disc and sword, lead us in eradicating this atrocious demon.”

*Vishnu* spoke to *Indr*, “It is not the time of my interference. Later, realising his ominous end, I would be a cause to his end, and not now. This is my word to you. You need to boldly face him now with the support of other gods.”

With the passing of night, at the break of dawn, the uproarious arrival of demons were heard. Fully prepared, accompanied by *rudr*, *aditya*, *vasu*, *marudgan*, *ashwini kumar* and other gods *Indr* came out of Amaravatipuri.

Demon Sumali (grandfather of Ravan) surrounded by Marich, Prahast, Mahaparshav, Mahodar, Akampan, Nikumbh, Shuk, Saran, Sanhlad, Dhumketu, Mahadanshtr, Ghatodar, Jambumali, Mahahlad, Virupaksh, Suptaghn, Ygyakop, Durmukh, Dushan, Khar, Trishira, Karviraksh, Suryashatru, Mahakaya, Atikaya, Devantak, and Narntak tore through the army of gods. Gods were dispersed as if wind had driven out clouds.

At the same time, Savitr, the eighth *vasu*, entered the battle ground in favour of gods. He was leading a huge army. Coinciding with the Savitr’s fighting, Twasta and Pusha two valorous sons of Aditi, came with more reinforcements to the gods. Despite all reinforcements gods were not able to face the demons and scared like deer they took to their heels.

Savitr, in great anger, renewed his attack over Sumali. As a strategy, he damaged the snakes pulled chariot of Sumaili. When Sumali fought with mace with him, he found a chance to pound heavily the head of the demon with his mace. Sumali was crushed beyond recognition.

## 7-28 Continuing fighting of gods and demons (49 / 1213)

With the fall of mighty Sumali, Meghanad took over the command over the ground. The gods army being brutally assaulted by him left the battle ground. Seeing the retreat of his army, *Indr* encouraged them, “Have patience and come back to the ground. My son Jayant would now be with you.”

With the arrival of Jayant, the fighting took a new turn. Gods measured well with the demons. Meghanad was directly facing Jayant. He tried to damage the chariot of Jayant being driven by Gomukh (son of Matali, charioteer of *Indr*). Invoking his sorcery Meghanad caused pitch darkness over the ground. Constrained by marred visibility, gods were killing gods, and demons were killing demons.

In the meanwhile Puloma, a warrior demon, who happened to be maternal grandfather of Jayant, kidnapped Jayant and entered deep ocean. When *Indr* heard about the mysterious disappearing of Jayant, he arrived over the battle ground to take over the command. He was supported by *rudra* and *marudgana*. They caused a great casualty of the demons. Kumbhakarn was engaged in wilful fighting. Because of the influence of liquor, he was not able to discriminate between gods and demons. He continued killing whoever fell in his sight. *Rudr* caused major injury to Kumbhakarn, and other demons also.

With the arrival of *Indr*, Ravan himself joined the demons to face the gods and Meghanad was asked to retire in his chariot. This time, the gods had proved superior to demons. Ravan steered through the gods to face directly *Indr*. Both were engaged in fierce fighting. There were only arrows and arrows flying in all quarters.

In the meanwhile pitch darkness dawned over the ground.

### **7-29 Meghanad arrested *Indr* (42 / 1255)**

Under the pall of darkness, the fighting further picked up. Only one tenth of demons army survived. Except *Indr*, Ravan and Meghanad others were deterred by the darkness. Realising major loss of his army, Ravan asked his charioteer to take him tearing through one end of gods army to the other end. At that time gods army was sprawled over the large area beginning from *nandan van* of *Amravatipuri* to Udayachal.

When Ravan entered alone through the north side of the gods army, *Indr* advised gods to arrest him. He mentioned, "Bali being put in bonds, we were allowed to enjoy the comfort of heaven. Ravan can't be killed because of Brahma's boon. Therefore, let us arrest him and put in prison."

In the meanwhile, Meghanad joined the demons. Resorting to the skill of sorcery he was not visible, and he continued dreadful shots over *Indr*. While *Indr* was not able to locate him, he caused grievous injury to Matali. *Indr* had to quit the chariot, and use *airavat*, his elephant mount. Meghanad got a chance to imprison *Indr*, and carried him in his chariot. He spoke to Ravan, "We need not continue fighting now. I have arrested *Indr*. Let us go back to Lanka."

Ravan was extremely happy with his performance and they soon returned to Lanka. In absence of his leader, gods also lost the guidance, and they sadly gathered to devise some way out for his release.

### **7-30 *Indr* released (54 / 1309)**

Surrounded by gods, Brahma arrived over Lanka, and staying afloat in sky, he praised the valour of Meghanad. He mentioned, "I am highly impressed by his performance. Ravan ! you have got a son superior to you. As coveted by you, all the three worlds have accepted defeat, and surrendered to you. From today Meghanad should be called by

another name Indrjeet. I am here to seek release of *Indr*. What boon Meghanad expects in lieu of *Indr*?"

Answering to Brahma's appeal, Meghanad demanded immortality. Brahma with sweet words impressed upon him, "No creature of the universe can stay alive for ever. This is beyond my jurisdiction, I can't commit this boon to you."

Meghanad then demanded, "Every time, I make a move to battle ground, I would perform oblation in fire. Let an impregnable chariot appear out of fire. So long as I am aboard that chariot I should be immune to death. Whenever I fail to perform an oblation and move to fight without seeking fresh chariot, my enemy may cause my end."

Brahma granted this boon to him, and released *Indr*. Sad and pale Indr accompanied by gods moved to heavens. Brahma reminded him for his lapse in maintaining austerity in the past, and that has caused the ignominious situation to him.

Saying this Brahma narrated the incident in detail, "In order to differentiate between the similarity of creation, I created the first woman extremely beautiful, and she was Ahalya. All gods including you craved to possess her. I didn't handover to any of you, rather I gave her to Gautam asking him take care of his chastity. Gautam demonstrated his accomplished austerity and he brought her back to me when I asked for her. Impressed by his saintly mind, I again handed over Ahalya to him as his wife. You carried the lust for her, and consequently you raped her in absence of Gautam. When he arrived, he cursed you to be trapped by the enemy during fighting. He also reminded you that such sin has been initiated by you, and therefore this will become a common practice hereafter. The half of such sin shall befall over the sinner, and the balance sin will come in your share. Thus with accumulation of sins of others, the position of *Indr* shall not be a property of one person, rather, it would be replaced by other *Indr* in succession."

Continuing further the story of Ahalya, Brahma said, "Gautam cursed Ahalya to become invisible, shorn of her charm and beauty. The sage mentioned to her that until now she was alone with such a charming physique, but henceforth scores of beings would be made beautiful like her. Ahalya pleaded her innocence that Indr was with her in the sage's disguise. She didn't know he was Indr, and her indulgence was not her fault. The sage had mercy on her. He assured her, when Vishnu would incarnate as Ram, while coming with Brahmins, he would exonerate her from that sin. Thereafter she would be able to join him again. Thereafter the sage entered his hermitage and Ahalya undertook a severe penance."

Reminding *Indr* of his sin, Brahma asked him to perform *vaishnav ygya* to regain his lost grace. As advised *Indr* performed the *vaishnav ygya* and subsequently went to heavens to occupy his seat.

**7-31 Ravan to king Arjun (44 / 1353)**

Hearing Agastya on Ravan's valour, Ram enquired, "During the period of Ravan it seems the earth was devoid of any king measuring to his stature." Agastya laughed and narrated the story of Ravan's visit to king of Mahishamatipuri.

When Ravan arrived to Mahishmatipuri, he asked the royal guard to inform the king Arjun of his arrival. He subsequently learnt that king Arjun was out of station. Thereafter, he came over *vindhya* mountain. Bewildered by natural scenic beauty of the mighty peaks of mountain *vindhya*, he happened to arrive at the bank of Narmada river. He was impressed by natural scenery of the river which flew westward towards sea. He advised his accompanying demons to take bath and relax since they were soaked with blood and tired of fighting. Ravan also took bath, and his ministers gathered white flower for the worship of *Mahadev*. He used to carry a *shivaling* (phallus in stone) always with him. Installing the *shivaling* over a high pedestal of sand, he commenced the worship of the deity.

**7-32 Arjun arrested Ravan (73 / 1426)**

Arjun was engaged in water game a little down stream over Narmada. He was blessed with one thousand hands, and using his mighty hands he stopped the flow of Narmada. Soon the river water flew in reverse direction towards upstream. Ravan worship place was on upstream and his place got submerged in water flowers drifting away with the river stream. He was midway of his worship, therefore maintaining silence, he indicated his ministers to find out the cause of reverse flow in the river.

Shuk and Saran who had been to find out the cause, came back and narrated, "A huge person equipped with thousand hands has put a dam over the flow." Ravan confirmed about Arjun and he moved to challenge him for a fight. Arriving at the scene, Ravan asked the attendants to Arjun to inform him about his challenge. The king's attendants spoke to Ravan, "You seem to be unaware of conduct rule of fight. When my master is enjoying water game with his beloved, you are asking him for a duel. Wait for tonight and tomorrow you may test your strength. Or, else if you are so excited, you can proceed to him after defeating us."

Hungry ministers of Ravan hawked over the attendants and ate them alive. The guards of the king Arjun took up the challenge and fierce fighting began with the demons. Some of the attendants informed Arjun about the incident. The king, taking his beloved women in confidence came out of the water and thrashed the demons. First victim was Prahast who pounded by his mace, fell unconscious over ground. Afraid of his strength, other demons ran away. Subsequently, Ravan and Arjun were engaged in dreadful duel. It was an interesting sight when one thousand hands were engaged fighting twenty hands. They fought for some time, but Arjun getting hold of Ravan tied him with strong rope as *Narayan* had tied demon king Bali (7-32-64). On the victory of Arjun, gods showered flowers over him.



When Arjun came back to his kingdom carrying the tied Ravan with him, citizens rejoiced the sight of a tied demon having ten heads and twenty hands.

### 7-33 Pulastya helped release of Ravan (23 / 1449)

Pulastya overheard gods mentioning about tying up of Ravan by Arjun. The bond of affection to his grandson, drew the sage Pulastya to the earth. When he landed near Mahishpatipuri, and moved on foot towards the king Arjun's palace, the king's attendants informed him about his arrival. The king keeping Brahmins in front, having auspicious materials for worship, came forward extending warm welcome to the sage. After offering *padya*, *argaha*, *madhupark* (7-33-9) and cows, the king submitted to the sage, "To day by your presence this Mahishmatipuri is like *Amravatipuri*. I am really fortunate, and my penance has borne fruits, when I welcome you here. What is your command for me?"

The sage was highly pleased with Arjun's greetings. Enquiring about his wellbeing, and status of sacrifices etc, he praised his strength, "You are mighty and invincible. Ravan was proud of his potential but he had been humiliated badly. I seek his release."

The king Arjun released Ravan immediately, and honouring him gift of royal dress and jewels, forged the bond of friendship keeping fire god as witness. Pulastya embraced Ravan, but he was ashamed of his humiliation. Pulastya, thereafter left for *brahmalok*, and Ravan departed on his mission.

### 7-34 Vali humiliated Ravan (46 / 1495)

Moving over earth to find his match Ravan once arrived at Kishkindha. He asked for a fight. Vali was not there, and his minister Tar, Sushen and prince Angad told him to wait for some time for return of Vali. They also advised that if he was pressed for time he might go and see him on south sea. Riding pushpak Ravan arrived at south sea and saw Vali engaged in *sandhyopasan* (morning ritual of worship). At that time Vali looked like a golden rising sun.

Ravan, subduing the sound of his footsteps, moved towards Vali with an intention to arrest him. Vali also saw him, but he continued his worship ignoring his presence as garud ignores a snake. But Vali could sense his bad intention, and maintained total alertness. The moment Ravan was about to extend his hand to catch Vali, the monkey king grabbed him and pressed him within his armpits. Vali then leapt up in sky and stormed towards the west sea. Ravan's ministers tried to help Ravan but they were not able to follow Vali.

Keeping Ravan in the armpit, Vali completed the morning ritual at north sea also. However, Ravan also tried in vain to injure Vali with his nails and teeth. Finally coming to Kishkindha, Vali released Ravan and asked him, "From where did you come? Ravan introduced himself and praised rare potential of Vali, "I am astonished to see your potential and speed of movement. Without getting tired you carried me like an animal to all the four extreme ends of earth. Your speed is like mind, *garud* and *vayu*. I had come to invite you for duel but have been duly answered. I extend hand of friendship to you.



Keeping witness of fire they forged the bond of friendship. Ravan stayed with Vali at Kishkindha for a month enjoying royal honour like Sugriv.

### 7-35 Advent of Hanuman (65 / 1560)

Hearing the valour of Vali, Ram surprisingly mentioned, “Hanuman is mightier than Ravan and Vali together. He performed the feat of crossing sea, meeting Sita in the inner protected zone, releasing himself from the fetter of Indrajeet, burnt Lanka. On his strength I had been able to achieve the target of killing Ravan, crowing Vibhishan, meeting Sita, reviving the life of Lakshaman, got the kingdom of Ayodhya. Being in possession of such a rare potential, I wonder why didn’t he give relief to Sugriv against the torture of Vali.”

Agastya mentioned, “In the childhood he was cursed by the sages that he will remain forgetful about his own strength. Unless somebody reminds him of his strength, he will not be able to take up any challenging assignment.” Speaking thus Agastya narrated the entire life profile of Hanuman to Ram.

Kesari was a renowned monkey staying at Meru mount. His wife was Anjana, and she gave birth to Hanuman by mental resolve of *vayu* god. Once in the morning, she was out to procure fruits, and Hanuman felt hungry. Looking in the sky, he mistook rising sun as some fruit and leapt to grab it. *Vayu* god also followed him bringing down the temperature around him to icy cold state. This saved him against the burning sun. It was *amavasya* day (15 th day of dark fortnight), and *rahu* had his due for eclipse of the sun. Presence of Hanuman foiled his bid to afflict sun. He came rushing to *Indr* and complained, “On your command I used to afflict sun, but someone else has grabbed this opportunity.”

*Indr* mounting his *airavat* (elephant mount), rushed to the site. *Rahu* speedily moved ahead of *Indr*. Looking at *rahu*, Hanuman considered moving *rahu* to be another fruit. Leaving the sun, he jumped over *rahu*. Consequently *rahu* cried for help. *Indr* rushed towards him for his safety. In the meanwhile moving *airvat* looked like another fruit to Hanuman, and leaving *rahu* he grabbed *airavat*. To bring him in control, *Indr* charged his bolt, causing Hanuman to fall down over a mountain. Hanuman’s left chin was broken, and *Vayu* god got displeased by such an action of *Indr*.

Taking Hanuman in his lap, he confined himself in a cave. The movement of air ceased, and the beings of the universe including celestials felt suffocation. Due to inactive air and breathing, the disposal of natural excretion of the beings halted, causing great discomfort to all. In absence of air, the fires of the oblation squares were extinguished. Sacred rituals, and study of scriptures were discontinued.

Scared of a major unknown catastrophe, gods collectively approached Brahma and complained about the life costing discomfort. Brahma spoke to them, “*Vayu* is an invisible life force ever present in the beings. To provide safeguard to *rahu*, *Indr* hit his son Hanuman, and with his broken chin Hanuman has become lifeless. Angry *vayu* has

withdrawn with Hanuman in a cave. We have to please him by our persuasion lest this world meets its end soon.”

Coming to *vayu* god, Brahma had a look at Hanuman, “Seeing his brilliant golden face he felt pity for the child and expressed his compassion.”

### 7-36 Hanuman got blessed (63 / 1623)

Seeing arrival of Brahma, *vayu* moved forward with Hanuman in his lap. In a respectful gesture, *vayu* fell over his feet. Brahma raised him up, and moved his hand over the child. Seeing Hanuman back to his life, *vayu* was highly pleased. His pleasure revived the dynamism among beings. Subsequently Brahma addressed the gods, “I understand you all are aware about this child, who will prove immensely beneficial in future to the wellbeing the gods.”

Enlightened by Brahma, *Indr* put a lotus garland around his neck and blessed him, “His left chin is broken, and therefore, he will be called Hanuman. In future he will be immune to any injury of my bolt.”

Sun god blessed him, “He will have one hundredth of my brightness. Later, I will teach him scriptures and he would emerge an influential speaker.”

*Varun* blessed him, “Even after the age of one million years, he will have no fear from my chain, and will never meet his end because of water.”

*Yam* blessed him to be long living and immune to his weapon. *Kuber* made him immune to his mace. *Shankar* ensured his immunity against all his weapons. *Viswakarma* blessed him a long life and made him fearless from all of the weapons made by him.

Blessing Hanuman, *Brahma* addressed *vayu*, “Your son will have a long life, and none of the *brahmdand* would be able to afflict him. Later, he will be of great help to Ram, in killing Ravan. I bless him to be endowed with the rare potential to assume any desired form, and he can move to any place at his desired speed.”

When Brahma went back with gods, *vayu* carried him to Anjana and narrated the entire incident. He left Hanuman in her care.

Gradually, elated of his potential, Hanuman caused lot of irritation to the sages. He used to destroy the *ygya* materials, by breaking the ladles and tearing apart the robes of the sages. They were aware of blessings of Brahma and gods, and therefore couldn't penalise him. Anjana and *vayu* had also forbade him umpteen times for troubling the sages. Later, one day the sages of angira and bhrugu dynasty cursed him, “You will forget your potential unless somebody reminds you.” Thereafter he behaved well with the sages and was found in quiet and calm state of mind.

Clearing the doubt Agastya spoke to Ram, “Riksharaja was a famous monkey king. Vali and Sugriv were his sons. When he died, Vali was made the king and Sugriva was the regent prince. Later, when Vali became cruel to Sugriv, neither Hanuman recalled his

potential, nor he was reminded by Sugriv. Thus Sugriv continued his distressed life over *rishyamuk*.”

Agastya further highlighted the special qualities of Hanuman, “While learning scriptures from sun, he used to move backward keeping him on his front. His knowledge is comparable to the knowledge of *Bruhaspati*.”

Mentioning about other monkeys, Agastya spoke to Ram, “Sugriv, Maind, Dwvid, Neel, Taar, Angad, Nal, Gaj, Gavaksh, Sudanshtr, Prabh, Jyotimukh and others are born from the part of various gods.”

Before leaving Agasty expressed his satisfaction and happiness for getting glimpse of Ram, and talking to him for long. Before he left, Ram invited him again during the forthcoming *ygya*, “I am fortunate to enjoy your association. After settling the people in their duties, I would initiate *ygya* soon. I pray all the sages to grace the occasion incessantly with their presence.”

Subsequently seeking leave of the kings and monkeys and Ram performed the evening worship and retired to his palace later during night.

### **7-37 Ram in royal court (24 / 1647)**

It was first night following the coronation of Ram in day hours. Before arrival of evening he was benefited by the presence of sages lead by Agastya. Later at night he retired to relax. Before he was awake, royal bards chanted his glory, “You are endowed with the endurance of earth, and brilliance of sun. In valour you are *Vishnu*, and in knowledge you are *Bruhaspati*. You have speed of *vayu*, and vastness of sea. Your face is sweet like moon. Fame and splendour are your eternal attendants.”

Rising from bed, Ram completed his normal routine of bath etc and went to the family temple to worship the deities. After his return from temple, he was greeted by Vashishth and other Brahmins. Subsequently, he occupied his royal seat in their presence. Bharart, Lakshaman, and Shatrughn took their position happily as if three *ved* had been attending the performance of *ygya*. Several ever smiling attendants were on their position to attend his call. Sugriv with twenty monkeys, and Vibhishan with four ministers took their respective seats. The vassal kings occupied their respectful position near the royal throne.

### **7-38 Farewell to Janak and others (33 / 1680)**

Ram continued spending his time following the daily routine of attending the royal court. After sometime, he requested Janak, “It was my good luck that you arrived and stayed with us so long. Now you may leave for Mithilapuri, accompanied by Bharat and Shatrughn.” The king Janak appreciated his sweet behaviour and expressed, “I had great privilege to be with you here.” Ram offered him precious gifts, but the king didn’t take them and advised them to be possessed by Sita. Later he left for Mithilapuri.

The maternal uncle and prince regent of Kaikeya desh, Yudhajit had stayed for long. Ram bade farewell to him and offered him precious gifts. Lakshaman was to accompany him to his kingdom. Yudhajit gave a round of Ram. He left for his place, and he gifted back the precious items to the royal possession.

Close friend of Ram was Pratardan, the king of Varanasi. With precious gifts he was given warm farewell.

There were over four hundred kings gathered at Ayodhya on the call of Bharat. They had arrived to avenge the abduction of Sita, but with the return of victorious Ram, they were also bade warm farewell.

### 7-39 Gifts to Ram (30 / 1710)

While getting back to their places, those kings chatted, "Bharat gave us late information. We had been deprived of enjoying the scene of fighting Ram with demons. Had we reached there in time, we could have secured the victory much earlier."

After reaching their places, they sent fabulous gifts of gold, gems, coral pieces, pearls, chariots, elephants, horses, goats and sheep to Ram. Receiving those gifts, Ram distributed them liberally among his monkey and bear friends.

Ram and Lakshaman drew Hanuman and Angad to his lap and gave them special gifts taking off from his body. Similarly he embraced the chiefs Nal, Neel, Maind etc one by one and handed over valuable gifts to them. He praised them for their invaluable help in securing victory over Ravan. They had been staying in Ayodhya for over a month (7-39-27), and it was second month of *shishir ritu* (*magh* and *falgun* months) (7-39-30) of their stay.

In common practice, *ashwin shukl dashami* (tenth day of bright fortnight of *ashwin*, post rainy month) is celebrated as victory day of Ram. If on *panchami* (6-124-1) he was at *Bhardwaj asharam*, then the *dashami* has to be understood with a greater rationality. In *sarg* 92, *shlok* 66, Ravan is seen talking to his minister on *chaturdashi*, i.e., 14 day of the dark fortnight. Using this as datum, Ram talking to Bharadwaj, in *sarg* 124, on *panchmi* appears to be consistent. The *panchmi* is definitely of bright fortnight (but not mentioned in *valmiki* whether dark or bright), because Ravan was the last post who had fought on *amavasya*. The following day of his stay at *Bhardwaj ashram*, i.e., on 6<sup>th</sup> day of bright fortnight Ram arrived in Ayodhya. There could be a possibility that his coronation was conducted on 10<sup>th</sup> day of the bright fortnight. In some part of India (Puri, *Srimandirof* lord Jagannath), coronation of Lord Ram is celebrated on *vaishakh*, *krishn navami* (9 th day of dark fortnight of *vaishakh*).

The references in 7-39-37 / 40 suggest that by all imagination victory date can't precede the month of *Agahan* during *hemant ritu* or winter months, and not in the *sharad* months of *aswin* and *kartik*. The search mission of Sita would have consumed upto *kartik*, because the south team was afraid of delay already made by them over the allotted period of one month by Sugriv. It seems around *Kartik amavasya* i.e., on *deepavali* day Hanumanjee brought news to Ram about Sita. Ravan was thus killed on *Agahan amavasya*, and lord Ram was crowned on *Agahan shukla shashthi*.

This is justified by the birth of lav kush in *shravan* i.e., 9 th month (refer 7-66-13). A reference to 7-42-26 / 30 has also pertinent relevance.

### 7-40 Farewell to monkeys and bears (31 / 1741)

It was the time of farewell to monkeys and bears. Ram spoke to Sugriv, "You should now go back to Kishkindha, and look after the affairs of the kingdom. I understand

Angad, Hanuman and other chiefs i.e., Jambvan, Maind, Neel etc., shall continue receiving your deep affection.”

Embracing Vibhishan he wished, “You are a righteous person by birth, and will rule the citizens following the rules of moral conduct.”

While they were being bid farewell, Hanuman sought a favour from him, “Let my interest in hearing and chanting your glory be maintained, until the earth exists. Bless me to maintain this body, which has been used for your service.”

Ram assured him, “My legend would be in prevalence, as long as the life of this planet. You will also retain your body until the prevalence of my legend. I am so much grateful to you that for your every act I will have to sacrifice my body. Thus I shall ever remain obliged to you, and won’t be ever able to payback your obligation.”

He embraced Hanuman closely, and offered his own pearl garland around his neck.

Honoured by Ram, the monkeys and bears, left Ayodhya with welling tears in their eyes.

#### **7-41 Coming back of *pushpak* (22 / 1763)**

Once while Ram was in royal court, he heard a voice from the sky, “Look towards me, I am *pushpak*. You had sent me back to kuber, but he has asked me to serve you. His logic is that your victory over Ravan has ensured the victory over *pushpak* also. This means I shall be at your call for ever.”

Welcoming back to Ayodhya, Ram honoured *pushpak* with auspicious materials. Thereafter he mentioned, “Now you are free, and come whenever I remember you. Hearing his command, *pushpak* disappeared.

Subsequently Bharat pointing out the special features of the reign of Ram, spoke to him, “Since your coronation, no one is deprived of good health. Women deliver child without difficulty. There is no incident of premature death. The land yield adequate cereals. Clouds rain in time, and air is always pleasant and soothing.”

#### **7-42 Ram in royal grove (36 / 1799)**

After the day’s royal obligations, Ram accompanied by Sita used to enjoy the natural scene of royal grove called *Ashok vanika*. The grove had varieties of fruits and flower bearing trees. A well maintained lake had presence of chirping birds. Sweet song and music were presented while Ram spent time in the grove.

In normal routine, first half in court and late afternoon was spent in grove. Sita also used to attend the mother queens in the forenoon, and later fully dressed accompanied Ram in *Aahok vanika*. Thus *shishir ritu* had come to an end (7- 42 -26). Later, Ram noticed the sign of pregnancy over Sita. He greeted her, and enquired, “You will be delivering child after some time. Do you have any wish?” Sita expressed her desire to visit the

hermitage of the sages on the bank of the *ganga*, and wished to spend one night there. Ram assured to send her next day to the place of her interest.

#### **7-43 Friends reminder to Ram (23 / 1822)**

Ram was benefited by the company of his friends: Vijay, Madhumatt, Kashyap, Mangal, Kul, Suraji, Kaliya, Bhadr, Dantvaktr, and Sumagadh. They used to narrate humorous stories to him. In course of his sitting with them, he also gathered the citizens impression about himself. Once he specifically enquired from Bhadr, "Which topic are most discussed among people?" Bhadr spoke to him, "Crossing the sea, forging friendship with monkeys and bears, and killing Ravan are often repeated topics."

When Ram specifically enquired about the most critical issue, Bhadr spoke with folded hands, "Acceptance of Sita is normally questioned by people. She was forcefully lifted by Ravan, and stayed for long in his inner grove. How did Ram accept her?"

Ram enquired, in this regard, from other friends, and all of them bowing low to his feet confirmed what Bhadr had mentioned.

#### **7-44 Ram in union with brothers (21 / 1843)**

Ram was agitated over the public criticism about Sita. He immediately sent for his three brothers. When the guard informed Lakshaman to be present to Ram, he rushed riding his chariot. The guard came to Bharat, and informed him to be present at Ram's palace; he quickly moved on foot. Similarly, Shatrughn, when heard about his summon, he saluted Ram bowing low on ground, and moved to his palace.

On information of the arrival of three brothers, Ram asked to usher them in. When they were before Ram, they noticed the agitated mind of Ram, and his eyes were moist with tears. Ram welcoming them gave proper seat, and mentioned that he would discuss with them a very critical issue. All the three brothers were in suspense.

#### **7-45 Lakshaman to drop Sita beyond *ganga* (25 / 1868)**

Ram divulged his anxiety to them, "I have learnt about a public criticism about Sita. Lakshaman knows how I had asked her to prove her chastity. She was found chaste and holy by fire god. Indr and other gods offered back Sita to me as she was pure and no malice had touched her. Now I hear public expressing their apprehension about her. I know her chastity, but for the sake of public criticism I am not able to retain her with me."

Ram directed Lakshaman, "Tomorrow morning you take her and drop her beyond *ganga*. On the bank of Tamasa, there is hermitage of Valmiki."

He further mentioned, "I don't prefer any debate from you. My decision of deserting her is final. She has expressed her desire today to visit hermitage of the sages on the bank of *ganga*. Her desire will thus be fulfilled. For my sake, I give you swear in my name, that don't express your any opinion to me in this regard."

With tearful eyes, they all dispersed.

#### **7-46 Sita on the *ganga* bank (33 / 1901)**

Next day in the morning, Lakshaman asked Sumantr to bring a chariot for taking Sita to *ganga*. The chariot was brought and Lakshaman informed Sita, "Yesterday you had expressed your desire to Ram about your desire to see the hermitages on *ganga* bank. The chariot is ready."

Sita happily collected some precious gifts for the wives of the sages and boarded the chariot with Lakshaman. When the chariot moved forward, Sita mentioned, "I notice some bad omens. My right eye pulsates, and I feel lack of inner excitement. The earth appears to be lonely and deserted. Let there be all auspiciousness." Lakshaman also wished auspicious future.

Subsequently they arrived on the bank of *gomati*, and spent the night there. Next day resuming the journey by noon time they arrived on the bank of *ganga*. Lakshaman burst into tears. Consoling him Sita spoke, "You can't bear the separation from Ram for a single day. We will not stay longer. In a day after meeting the sages we will go back to Ayodhya."

When Lakshaman asked for the boat to take them across, it was soon made ready.

#### **7-47 Sita across *ganga* (18 / 1919)**

Lakshaman advised Sumantr, "Wait until I come back." Boarding the boat, they were soon taken across *ganga*. Showing the hermitages of the sages, Lakshaman wept bitterly, and he fell over the feet of Sita, "I seek immediate end of my life. Ram asked me to perform this disgraceful job for which I shall ever be condemned."

Sita couldn't understand what Lakshaman meant. She spoke to him, "I don't understand your words. Is Ram in good health? This is my order tell me the truth."

Lakshaman divulged, "Learning about public condemnation of your stay in Lanka he has deserted you. Although fire god has sanctified you, but the public keep on condemning your acceptance. Consequently Ram had deserted you."

Encouraging Sita Lakshaman mentioned, "In the close vicinity from here there lies the hermitage of Valmiki who is friend of our father. You should seek shelter there, and discarding all fear, keep meditating on Ram."

#### **7-48 Sita deserted (26 / 1945)**

The words of Lakshaman caused great shock to Sita, and she fell unconscious over ground. Regaining her senses, she spoke, "There seems to be no end of my ill luck. I spent the tough life of forest for the pleasure of my husband. I was abducted by the demon and had to remain there immersed in sorrow of separation from Ram. The public denunciation of my stay in Lanka has caused further agony of separation from Ram. I

could have ended my life in *ganga* but I am reminded of my responsibility of protecting the royal heritage. I am pregnant and I can't do that. Convey my palm folded respects to queen mothers and Ram. He should always adhere to righteousness so that his image is not blemished."

Lakshaman couldn't speak any word, and falling on her feet in reverence, left the place with tears in his eyes. Coming soon across *ganga*, he boarded the chariot in great agony. He kept looking towards her while the chariot was departing away and away. He was out of sight, and Sita fell in swoon. Her agony had culminated high finding no immediate refuge to her.

#### **7-49 Sita met Valmiki (23 / 1968)**

Children of the sages saw Sita weeping alone. They informed Valmiki, "The woman has rare beauty of goddess *Lakshmi* and she weeps bitterly. She is alone sitting on the bank of *ganga*. She is in need of some shelter." Valmiki through his mediation come to know the details. Carrying holy water pot he arrived where Sita was weeping. He spoke to her, " You are wife of Ram, daughter in law of Dasarath, and daughter of Janak. I have come to know all about you from my meditation. Ram has deserted you without your fault. Don't worry, accept this *arghya* of holy water, and come with me. Several women sages are engaged in penance here. They will take your proper care."

She fell on his feet, and thereafter followed him. When women sages saw Valmiki coming to them, they welcome him and asked the wellbeing in sweet words. Valmiki narrated all about Sita to them. They happily greeted Sita in their fold, and Valmiki left for his hermitage.

#### **7-50 Sumantr disclosed the secret prediction (20 / 1988)**

Lakshaman was shocked to see Sita entering the hermitage. He spoke to Sumantr, " Ram has a rare life profile. He has always been put to test, and have suffered miserably. On the words of his father, he spent fourteen years in forest. Now on public denunciation, he is without wife. This is called luck."

Hearing the words of Lakshaman, Sumantr divulged, "Long back Durvasa had disclosed in presence of king Dasarath and *guru* Vashishth that Ram would always suffer from the separation of his near and dear ones. He has deserted Sita, and later he will desert you, Bharat and Shatrughn also. Although the king had forbade me to disclose this to anybody, I can't help, and I can tell you the detail. You should not disclose it to Bharat and Shatrughn."

#### **7-51 Durvasa's disclosure (30 / 2018)**

Once during four months of rainy season Durvasa stayed with Vashishath. King Dasarath happened to meet the sages together. Offering his respect in the feet of the sage Durvasa, Dasarath enquired about Ram, "How long Ram will live? How long his sons will live? I am curious to know about the details of my other sons."



Durvasa narrated the story of the curse of Bhrgu. During the war of gods and demons, during the incarnation of Vaman bhagwan, demons took shelter at the hermitage Bhrgu. Out of compassion, the sage's wife provided them refuge. When Vishnu came to know about this, he cut the head of the sage's wife. The sage was shocked and he cursed Vishnu, "You will suffer from separation of wife." When the sage performed penance, Vishnu appeared and assured the sage about accepting his curse.

Durvasa continued, " Ram is incarnation of Vishnu and he will suffer from separation of wife. He will rule for eleven thousand years before departing to his divine abode. He will coronate his two son out of Ayodhya."

Disclosing the prediction of Durvasa, Sumantr consoled Lakshaman, "Don't lament, it is all ordained." With quiet mind they spent their night at Keshini river.

### **7-52 Lakshaman encouraged Ram (19 / 2037)**

Leaving Keshini in the morning Lakshaman arrived by noon at Ayodhya. He was worried, "What shall I convey to Ram?"

Getting down from the chariot straightway he entered the chamber of Ram. He found him immersed in sorrow and his eyes shed tears. Lakshaman submitted, "To obey your command I dropped holy and worthy Sita on the bank of ganga near the sages hermitage. Afraid of public denunciation you deserted her, if you continue in sorrow, people will further denounce your weakness for Sita. You have to demonstrate stable state of mind."

Getting encouraged by words of Lakshaman, Ram spoke, "I am greatly satisfied that you followed my command. I also derive peace from your sweet words. I now discard the sorrow and shall attain peace of mind."

### **7-53 Lakshaman to attend public call (26 / 2163)**

Ram praised Lakshaman and made him in-charge to attend public grievances. Showing utmost importance of royal responsibility he narrated the story of king Nrug.

'Nrug was a great king always maintaining austerity, truthfulness and righteousness. Once coming to Pushkar he offered ten million cows to Brahmins in charity. Among the herd of cows, one cow of a poor Brahmin was mixed up. The Brahmin was not able to locate his cow. One day he located his cow at another brahmin's place. The name of the cow was Shabala. He called her name and the cow followed him. The other Brahmin who had got that cow from the king Nrug, maintained his claim over the cow. Both together went to the royal palace for justice. Somehow, despite their long stay, they couldn't meet the king. Consequently they cursed the king, "You have taken a safe refuge like a chameleon, therefore, you are cursed to become a chameleon. You will attain your liberation from this curse during incarnation of Srikrishna. Those Brahmins also disclosed that just before the advent of *Kaliyug*, Nar and Narayan will incarnate (7-53-22) for the common wellbeing.'

Ram reminded Lakshaman, "The king Nrug was although truthful and religious he had to suffer from the curse only because there was a lapse in audience to the public grievances.

#### **7-54 Nrug suffered curse (19 / 2182)**

Lakshaman wanted to know what happened to Nrug further. Ram narrated the story about his life as a chameleon.

'On departure of the Brahmins, the king learnt about their curse. He readily accepted the curse and crowned his son *vasu* as king. Three types of ditches to suit the conditions of three different seasons (rain, winter and summer) round the year, were made ready. Seasonal fruit bearing trees were also planted around the ditches. Fragrant flowers in six *yojan* wide strip, surrounding the ditches were planted. As cursed the king was transformed in the form of a chameleon, and took refuge in the previously prepared ditches.'

#### **7-55 Nimi and Vashishath cursed each other (21 / 2203)**

Ram enquired whether Lakshaman wanted to hear more stories. Getting his affirmative reply, Ram narrated the story of curse between Vashishth and Nimi.

' Nimi was the twelfth child of Ikshvaku. He was religious and upholder of truth. Once he resolved to perform a long continuing *ygya* for five thousand years. With this intention he offered the chief priestly position to Vashishath. He also invited Angira and Bhrgu to grace the occasion.

Before commencing the *ygya*, Vashishath informed the king Nimi, " Prior to your invitation I had already accepted the invitation of Indr. Therefore wait until I come back." In the meanwhile, Gautam initiated the role of Vashishath. When Vashishath returned he found the *ygya* initiated by Gautam. He lost the cool of his mind and wanted to see the king. After waiting for a couple of hours he couldn't meet the king. During that period the king was sleeping. Infuriated sage Vashishath cursed the king to lose his physical form.

When the king was awake he learnt about the curse hurled by Vashishath on him. He said, "I didn't have any information about your arrival therefore I am not at fault of keeping you waiting. However you have cursed me under spell of wrath, I also curse you to lose your physical identity.

Both lost their physical form.'

#### **7-56 Mitr, Varun and Urvashi (29 / 2232)**

Having lost his physical form, invisible Vashishath arrived to Brhahma. Paying respect to him, he spoke, "I have lost my physical form because of Nimi's curse." Brahma advised him to travel in the semen of Varun, and Mitr, and you will come out in physical form without getting into anybody's womb. You will continue receiving your earlier honour."

During those days god Mitr had shared the duties of god Varun and both were respectful to gods. Urvashi, a famous celestial dancer happened to take her bath in *ksheersagar*. Seeing her charming physical form, Varun's lust got provoked. Subsequently he asked Urvashi to spend some time with him. Answering his solicitation, she told him that she had already accepted Mitr as her passion partner. Respecting her decision Varun spoke to her, "I can't contain my charged semen, and I eject it into a pot." Urvashi was glad over his decision, and then she left the place, and came to Mitr.

Mitr was very angry over her late arrival, and cursed her to go to earth, "There is a king of Kashi, and his name is Pururav. He is son of Budh and he will be your husband." Before her arrival, Mitr had already discharged his semen in the pot where *Varun* had subsequently dropped his semen.

Urvashi came to Prathishthanpur, near *prayag* and living with Pururava produced a son called Ayu. Subsequently Ayu was blessed with a son called Nahush, who became *Indr* for one hundred thousand years. The seat of *Indr* had fallen vacant because *Indr* was afflicted by the sin of killing a Brahmin (*Vrutasur*).

#### **7-57 Vashishth revived, and lineage of Nimi (21 / 2253)**

From the semen pot of Mitr and Varun was first born Agastya. He left saying, "I am not son of Mitr. Later, Vashishth came out of that, and he revived his original form. He was accepted as family preceptor of *Ikshavaku* house.

Although Nimi had no physical form but his spirit permeated the air. The *ygya* initiated by him was successfully completed on his behalf by the Brahmins and priests. Pleased by his interest in the *ygya*, Bhrgu enquired whether he had any wish. Nimi wanted, "I should be given a place over the eyelids. To reduce the tiredness of eye, I would cause momentary closing of the eyelids, which will provide relaxation to the eyes." Bhrgu granted to be so.

The body of Nimi was saved in oil tub. Taking his body, stirring exercise was conducted over his body. This resulted into the birth of Mithi. Because of the strange technique adopted he was called Janak also. Since he was an output of the body having no life, he was *Videh*. From Mithi is derived a word *Maithili* which means child of the house of Mithi. *Janak videh* had been used as a title of the descendants of Nimi.

#### **7-58 Yayati cursed (25 / 2278)**

Lakshaman was surprised over loose temper of Nimi, "He should have exercised restraint." Answering his doubt Ram quoted an example of Yayati, "Very few persons would be like Yayati who endured the curse without any retaliatory reaction." Saying thus he narrated the legend about Yayati.

'Yayati was son of Nahush and had earned a good reputation as a king. He had two wives, Sharmishtha and Devayani. The former was the daughter of a demon, while the latter was the daughter of Shukracharya. Sharmishth gave him a son called Puru,

whereas Devayani's son was known as Yadu. Yayati had more affection for Sharmishtha, and therefore Devayani and Yadu felt ignored and neglected. One day, Yadu proposed to her mother, "I can't bear the differential treatment of the king, and therefore both of us should end our life. If you want to live, you can do that, but I would end my life alone."

Devayani remembered his father Shukracharya, and he appeared before her. She narrated her pitiable condition in the house of Yayati. Hearing her agony, Shukracharya went to Yayati and cursed him to lose his handsome youthful physique, and attain ugly old age seized with the state of inactivity.'

### 7-59 Puru and Yadu (23 / 2301)

After Shukracharya left the place, Yayati turned into a weak and pale old person. His anxiety was to regain the youth again. He sent for his son Yadu and spoke to him, "My appearance of old age is exchangeable. May I borrow your youth?" Yadu replied him point blank, "You should solicit it from your beloved son Puru."

When the king solicited the youth from Puru, he spoke, "I am fortunate to serve my father. Do it immediately." Yayati regained his youth and Puru became an old and aged person. Living for a long life of passion and lust, the king Yayati, one day spoke to Puru, "I now take back my old age from you and offer back your youth to you. I also crown you the king." Thus Puru became king and stayed at Prathishthanpur.

Subsequently, Yayati cursed Yadu, "You disobeyed my command, and demonstrated disrespect to me. I am pained by your strange behaviour which is closer to the behaviour of a demon than a *kshatriya*. You and your descendants shall always remain deprived of royal share."

Ram concluded the story mentioning that Nimi retaliated to Vashishath whereas Yayati demonstrated restraint.

While narrating such stories, the night came to an end. It was the first night when Sita was deserted and Lakshman had come back after dropping her near the hermitage of Valmiki.

### 7-59 /1<sup>9</sup> A dog in royal court (28 / 2329)

Observing the regal practice, Ram occupied in the morning his seat in the royal court. He asked Lakshman to personally verify whether some body was waiting with some grievances.

During the reign of Ram, nobody suffered from any affliction. The trees and crops had adequate yield to meet the people's requirement. Nothing was found lacking.

<sup>9</sup> This *sarg* 7-59/1 and subsequent *sarg* 7-59/2 are not common in prevalent several versions of *valmiki ramayan*.

Righteousness prevailed over criminal attitude. Naturally there was no grievance for the king.

Finding none on the royal gate with any grievance, Lakshaman reported accordingly. He was again asked to recheck on the royal gate. When he came out, he found one dog barking on him. He asked whether he had any grievance. The dog answered in affirmative and mentioned to present his grievance personally to the king. Lakshaman went back to Ram to seek his permission to bring the dog in who was there on royal gate with a grievance. Coming out when Lakshaman asked him to get into the royal court he mentioned, "The temples, royal palaces, and the houses of brahmins are the sacred places where gods ( i.e., Fire, Indr, Surya and Vayu) reside. I can't enter without permission of the king. You need to confirm from the king about my entry."

### 7-59/2 The grievance of the dog (52 / 2481)

Appearing before Ram, the dog mentioned, "The king is the protector of the citizens. *Dharm* (righteousness) means to uphold<sup>10</sup> the welfare of others (7-59/2- 7). Since a king is pledged to uphold the welfare of others, he is the manifestation of *dharm*."

Continuing further he lodged his complain, "One mendicant Brahmin named Sarvarthsidh had caused injury to my head. I am sure I hadn't caused any harm to him."

Ram immediately summoned the Brahmin. When he appeared in the royal court, he was asked to explain his misbehaviour to the dog. The Brahmin mentioned, "I was hungry, and in course of my soliciting food at the dwelling houses, the dog time and again stood on mid of the road. I advised him to take a side, but he didn't pay heed to my words. Getting angry, I hit his head with my rod. I am a culprit, and I am ready to accept the decree of the king."

Ram sought the advice of the sages (Vashishath, Angira, Kashyap and others) for pronouncing appropriate punishment to the Brahmin. The sages mentioned, "A Brahmin is immune to any physical punishment."

In the meanwhile, the dog interfered and advised to make the Brahmin as the sole in-charge of a religious inn (*math* मठ). Ram liked his idea. Soon an elephant was brought and the Brahmin mounted on the elephant was sent as master of the inn at Kalanjar.

When others expressed their surprise whether it was a punishment or boon, Ram asked the dog to explain the mystery behind such a strange punitive measure. The dog narrated his autobiography, "In my previous birth I was also the master of the same inn of Kalanjar. I had taken extreme precaution to keep the visitors and inhabitants of the inn satisfied. Whatever gifts were received at the inn, they were duly distributed among the needy people. The result is evident, I became a dog in the subsequent birth."

<sup>10</sup> धारणाद् धर्ममित्याहुर्धर्मिण विधृताप्रजा

**7-60 Chyavan met Ram (18 / 2499)**

The advent of spring season had made the nights pleasant. Ram regularly attended the royal duties and maintained the happiness among the citizens.

Once, sage Chayavan arrived leading hundreds of other saints from the bank of river *Yamuna*. While meeting Ram they offered in gift pots of holy water of sacred places and lots of fruits.

Extending warm welcome to them, Ram enquired about their any specific purpose of visiting Ayodhya, and pledged to fulfil them immediately. The sages were glad with the warm treatment and his assurances.

**7-61 Atrocities of Lavanasur (24 / 2523)**

As desired by Ram, the sage Chyavan narrated the cause of their coming to Ayodhya.

He mentioned, "We are being harassed by a demon called Lavanasur. His father is Madhu who is a great soul and used to respect the sages and gods. Performing a persevering penance, Madhu pleased Shankar. Shankar produced a trident similar to the one he holds in his hand. Gifting it to Madhu he warned him not to use it indiscriminately over gods and Brahmins otherwise that would return back to him. The trident is a potent weapon, capable of razing the opponents to ground. Madhu sought its continuance to his succeeding lineage also. Shankar rejected his demand, but as he was pleased over him, consented the continuance of the trident to his immediate son only."

Narrating the storey further, the sage said, "The son of Madhu, is impudent and a rogue. He often harasses the saints and Brahmins disturbing their sacrificial performances in fire. Madhu also warned him to mend his ways but he didn't pay attention to his words. Disgusted with his nature, Madhu had withdrawn to ocean handing over the trident to his son Lavanasur. He has made him aware about the limitation of the trident."

Chayvan passionately sought Ram's interference, "Our appeals to several kings have been so far futile. We have heard about your bravery in Lanka, and therefore have come to you for help."

**7-62 Shatrughn to face Lavanasur (21 / 2544)**

When Ram sought more details about the life style of Lavanasur, the sage spoke to him, "He is carnivorous. Mostly saints fall in his trap."

Ram making a firm commitment for his elimination, sought the help from his brothers, "Who between Bharat and Shatrughn would help me in this regard?" Although Bharat readily gave his consent to tackle the demon, Shatrughn put his claim forcefully, "Bharat had been fortunate to serve your cause for pretty long time. This service should be in my share."

Ram agreed to Shatrughan's offer, and spoke to him, "You have to accept my command without expressing any rhyme or reason. I would crown you today the king of the country in possession of Madhu. Thereafter, you will take appropriate steps to eliminate Lavanasur."

### 7-63 Shatrughn's coronation (31 / 2575)

Hearing Ram's command for his coronation, Shatrughn softly submitted, "Scriptures prohibit the crowning of the youngest in presence of the elders. I realise my fault for interfering Bharat's pledge to kill the demon. Most respectfully, I am ready to obey your command, and I won't mention anything more, for I am afraid, I may commit another mistake as I did by interfering Bharat."

On the command of Ram all auspicious items were gathered. Subsequently, he performed the coronation of Shatrughn as a king. He gifted one infallible arrow to Shatrughn, "This arrow belongs to Vishnu, who had used this to kill Madhu and Kaitabh. I didn't use this to kill Ravan for fear of loss of several other innocent lives. Now you have to use this arrow against Lavanasur."

Ram also deliberated on the strategy how to kill Lavanasur, "He worships the Shankar's trident, and does not carry it always with himself. Whenever the situation arises, he picks it up from home, and uses to his opponents. You have to find out when he is out of the city without trident. When he comes back, keep barricading his entry to the city, and throw challenge to him to pick up the fight before getting possession of the trident. That is the opportune time to kill him."

### 7-64 Forces dispatched (18 / 2593)

Ram asked Shatrughn to dispatch the forces in advance so that they cross *ganga* by end of summer. The appropriate time for attack over Lavansur is rainy season. Accordingly, Shatrughn dispatched for thousand cavalry, two thousand chariots, one hundred elephants and other support services to keep the army fully spirited. As advised by Ram, he also carried one million gold coins to feed the army (7-64-4). He directed the chiefs of the forces to camp after crossing *ganga* on its other bank.

The army was sent in advance, and Shatrughn left Ayodhya after one month of their departure. While departing he offered respectful salutation to mother kausalya, Sumitra, and Kikeyi. Thereafter bowing to the feet of *guru* Vashishath, and his elder brothers Lakshaman, and Bharat, he came to Ram. Offering his respect on his feet, he made his auspicious round, and moved out alone.

### 7-65 Shatrughn at Valmiki's hermitage (39 / 2632)

Spending two nights on way, third day Shatrughn arrived at the hermitage of Valmiki. Paying his respect to the feet of the sage, he introduced himself as brother of Ram, and sought his permission to stay for one night. Extending warm welcome to him, the sage offered him fruits, *arghya* etc and spoke, "This place is free for the family members of the

house of *Ikshavaku*. You are most welcome.” Satisfied with roots and fruits, he spent some time in the cottage of Valmiki.

Subsequently Shatrughn saw huge relic of grand *ygya* performed around that place. He enquired from the sage about that *ygya*. To answer his query, Valmiki narrated the story:

Sudas was an illustrious king of your family. His son Mitrasah मित्रसाह *guru* variously called Virsah वीरसाह and Saudas सौदास was a brave child. Once he was on his hunting mission in the forest. He noticed two demons disguised as tigers killing deer. They killed all the deer of the forest. The child Mitrasah was upset with their misdeeds. He killed one of them at the site. The other demon, in great anguish, threatened Mitrasah for avenging the killing of his friend. Saying thus the demon disappeared.

Subsequently Mitrasah became king. Later, he organised a *ygya* chaired by the sage Vashishath. The *ygya* lasted for several years. When the final day of completion of the *ygya* arrived, the demon recalling his past revenge with the king came to him in the disguise of Vashishath. He asked, “Without any query, serve me today meat for my food.” The king advised the cook, but they were puzzled. In the meanwhile the demon disguised as the cook prepared the meat of a human being. The king accompanied by his wife Madyanti, served the food to the sage. Realising to be meat, Vashishath burst to the brim, “The food you have served me shall be your regular food (which meant he was cursed to become a demon). The king, in retaliation, held the holy water in his palm to curse his *guru*, but his wife prevented him in doing so. Subsequently he dropped that charged water over his own feet which turned the complexion of his feet to piebald black. Since that day he got his another name, Kalamashpad कल्मषपाद.

The sage grew compassionate on him and pronounced a boon, “This curse will not last longer than twelve years. Thereafter you will lose your old memory, and regain your crown.”

Hearing the legend of the king मित्रसाह, Shatrughn retired for the night.

### 7-66 Sita gave birth to two sons (17 / 2649)

It was midnight, Valmiki was awakened by the young boys, “Sita has given birth to a twin.” The sage happily entered the cottage where Sita was staying. Seeing two male babies, Valmiki invoked holy *mantr* meant to ensure safety of the nascent children against ghosts and evil creatures. He gave two separate bunch of *kush* charged with safety *mantr* to the elderly women to use them as auspicious tool to drive out evils from the cottage. He named the elder one as Kush, and the younger one as Lav.

Shatrughn also heard at night the names of Sita and Ram being chanted frequently along with holy *mantr*. Having come to know about the birth of a twin, he entered Sita’s



cottage and mentioned, "It is very auspicious moment." He was so much overjoyed that he couldn't realise passing of the night of *savan*<sup>11</sup> (7-66-13) month so fast."

Getting up in the morning, Shatrughn performed his routine worship and moved westward. It took him seven nights to arrive at the *Yamuna* bank *ashram* of the sage Chyavan. Hearing holy legends, he spent pleasant time in the association of the sages.

### 7-67 King Mandhata (26 / 2675)

Shatrughn enjoyed the legends narrated by the sage Chayavan. During discourses of one night, he enquired about the valour of Lavanasur and the potency of his trident. He also wanted to know who had so far been killed by him. As a sample case the sage narrated the story of the king Mandhata.

In the lineage of Ikshavaku there was a king named Mandhata who was son of Yuvnashva. Mandhata was known for his gallantry performances. Having almost won the kings of the earth he attacked over heavens to grab at least half of the kingdom of Indr. The chief of gods Indr questioned Mandhata, "Did you subjugate all the terrestrial kings?" Mandhata was proud of his performances, but Indr doubted whether Lavanasur, son of Madhu could listen to his commands.

Picking up Indr's reference, Mandhata came back and sent a messenger to Lavanasur seeking his earliest surrender to him. Instead of getting afraid of his message, the demon devoured the messenger alive. Not seeing the return of the messenger, Mandhata attacked over Lavanasur with his army. The demon came out to counter the attack, and he hurled his radiant trident over the attacking army. After burning to ashes Mandhata and his entire army, the trident got back to the demon.

Concluding the story, the sage advised Shatrughn, "In the morning he goes out for collecting meat. While coming back, and before he enters the palace, you should intervene and kill him swiftly."

### 7-68 Shatrughn tracked Lavanasur (20 / 2695)

In the morning, Lavanasur came out of the city of Madhupuri to gather meat for his day's food. Shatrughn, in the mean time took control of the entry gate awaiting his return. In the afternoon the demon returned carrying thousands of dead bodies over his shoulders. When he saw Shatrughn standing on the entry gate he threatened him, "Your bow and arrow will not work. You will soon join those thousands of beings who have met their end here. I would comeback soon with my weapon."

Saying thus when he wanted to move forward towards his palace, Shatrughn obstructed his movement and said, "Only a fool can spare the enemy from his trap. Now forget

<sup>11</sup> Kush and Lav were born in the month of *savan* सावन of the rainy season.

about your weapon, come and fight with me. I am Shatrughn, son of Dasarath and brother of Ram.”

Lavan spoke to him, “Good that you came to me. I had heard about Ram who had killed Ravan for a woman. Ravan was brother of my maternal aunt Surpanakha. That time I spared your brother by not joining the fight but today you will not go back alive.”

#### **7-69 Lavanasur killed (40 / 2735)**

When challenged by Shatrughn, the demon uprooted several trees and hurled them over Shatrughn. Those trees were countered by his arrows. The shafts of Shatrughn caused numerous injuries over the demon’s body. Subsequently, the demon, finding a chance, hurled again one massive tree over him, and he fell unconscious over the ground. This caused great anxiety to the gods watching the encounter from sky. The demon taking him dead, didn’t care to bring his trident.

While he was busy picking up the corpses he had brought from forest, Shatrughn recovered and again took over the command. The wave of joy prevailed among gods. This time, Shatrughn loaded the ultimate shaft gifted by Ram. Having looked over the brilliant shaft over the string, the gods were panicked. They approached Brahma and apprised him about unusual shaft in the possession of Shatrughn. Brahma calmed them down, “It is the shaft of Vishnu created earlier to eliminate two dreadful demons Madhu and Kaitabh. There should be no panic.”

Finally, Shatrughn shot the shaft over Lavanasur. Striking over the chest of the demon, it sapped his life, and went deep into the earth. Subsequently it came back to Shatrughn. The sages and gods rejoiced the killing of the dreadful demon. The trident lying in the palace, deserted Madhupuri, and went back flying to god Shankar.

#### **7-70 Madhupuri rehabilitated (17 / 2752)**

Gland gods appeared before Shatrughn and enquired whether he had any wish. Shatrughn expressed his desire to rehabilitate the city again. Gods blessed him to be so and departed to their celestial abode.

Shatrughn commanded the army camped at *ganga* bank to come to Madhupuri. Commencing from the month of *savan* (7-70-8 /9) it took twelve years in rehabilitating the city. It was situated along the crescent course of the river Yamuna. Varieties of commercial houses along with large mansions enhanced the dynamism in the city of Madhupuri. Natural scene created from the varieties of fruit and flower bearing trees was the special feature of the city.

#### **7-71 Shatrughn on return journey to Ayodhya (24 / 2776)**

Shatrughn was excited to meet Ram. Leaving major army for the safety of Madhupuri, he left for Ayodhya escorted by a small contingent of one hundred chariots. Staying at seven eight places on way he arrived at the hermitage of Valmiki. Greeted warmly by

Valmiki he spent his night there. Valmiki blessed him, "When you killed Lavana I was with Indr in heaven. I was impressed to watch your fight with the demon. The killing of the demon has removed the pall of fear from the transYamuna area."

As a token of affection, Valmiki smelled his head. After taking food, Shatrughn listened to the song depicting the biography and pastime of Ram. The text of the song was composed in lucid Sanskrit. The accompanying music of violin was so captivating as if each event appeared to take place before the eyes. Entire army accompanying Shatrughn was thrilled to listen to the songful glory of Ram, and they submitted to Shatrughn, "Enquire about this melodious and heart sweetening program." Shatrughn spoke to them, "Such things keep on happening here at this *ashram* of Valmiki, and therefore it is not proper to enquire from him." Later he entered his cottage to retire.

### 7-72 Shatrughn met Ram (21 / 2797)

For quite some time at night, Shatrughn didn't sleep, and continued enjoying the notes on violin coming straight to his cottage. Next morning, after waking up, he performed his daily ritual and met the sage. Offering his respect over his feet, sought his permission to depart to Ayodhya.

He was excited to meet Ram, and therefore, arriving at Ayodhya, he went straight to see Ram. Saluting over his feet, he spoke to him, "As commanded by you the demon had been eliminated. Twelve years have rolled out settling the city and I was excited to have your *darshan* (दर्शन holy glimpse)."

Embracing him, Ram spoke encouraging words, "You have indeed performed the tough task. For a *kshatariya* staying outside should not be taken with frustration and nostalgia of home coming. After a week you should be back to your city. The service to keep the citizens happy is of utmost importance to a king."

Shatrughn accepted his command readily. After staying for a week he left for Madhupuri. He was seen off by Bharat and Lakshaman who came escorting him to his chariot.

### 7-73 A wailing Brahmin (19 / 2816)

Premature death was unheard in the reign of Ram, but an old Brahmin came wailing at the royal gate. He was carrying the dead body of his lone son. He mentioned, "I haven't committed any sin, nor did I hurt anybody. The untimely death of my son is indicative of the sin of the king. It is said due to sin of the king, the citizens have to suffer. If my child doesn't revive I along with my wife would end our lives here on the royal gate."

### 7-74 Narada identified the cause (33 / 2849)

Immediately the royal court was held. Arrival and presence of eight eminent sages (Markandeya, Maudgalya, Vamdev, Kashyap, Katyayan, Jabali, Gautam and Narad) marked the proceedings of the deliberations. Ram sought their advice on the cause of untimely death of the *brahmin's* child. Pondering over the anxiety of Ram, Narad spoke,

“During *satyug* only Brahmins resorted to *tapasya* (penance for spiritual enhancement and overall well being), and that caused the presence of *dharm* with four quarters over earth. In *tretayug*, *kshatriya* enhanced their strength, and they attained higher status equivalent to Brahmins. Manu initiated *chaturvarnya* (चतुर्वर्ण्य four categories of people's class) and enjoined their social as well as individual duties and responsibilities. According to this, in *tretayug* only *kshatriya* have been allowed to undertake penance. This relaxation was done at the cost of loss of one quarter of *dharm* from earth. In the coming *dwapar yug* further relaxation to *vaishya* for performing penance would cause loss of one more quarter of *dharm* which means *dharm* would stay with only two quarters on earth. In *kaliyug*, *shudr* shall also be allowed to undertake penance, and thus three quarters of *dharm* shall disappear from earth.”

Deliberating further, Narad mentioned, “One sixth (7-74-31) of the benefits of auspiciousness from the people's *dharm* and penance, automatically accrue in the account of the king. Therefore the king is responsible to protect the citizens. At present, due to prevalence of *tretayug* only *kshatriya* are allowed to undertake penance and sacrifices. The death of the *brahmin*'s child appears to have been caused by the penance being performed by the other category of people who are not enjoined by the scriptures. Therefore it is necessary to detect and stop the incidence of undertaking such efforts by the unauthorised category of people.”

#### 7-75 Ram on detection mission (19 / 2868)

Responding to Narad's command, Ram advised Lakshaman, “Keep the dead body of the *brahmin*'s child anointed with herbs in oil tub lest it decayed. Assure the old *Brahmin* for our due service to him.”

Subsequently he made a mental call to *pushpak*, and that appeared instantly. Deputing Lakshaman and Bharat on duty of providing protection to citizens, he boarded *pushpak* equipped with bow, arrows and a sword. First he moved in the west. Finding everything in order, he went to the north, and couldn't detect any lapse there also. Similarly his visit of the east was also without any blemish. When he arrived in the south, he found a person conducting a tough penance. The location was near a lake situated on the northern side of the *shaival mountain*. The practitioner stayed perched over a tree with head hanging down freely.

Ram paused and enquired from him, “What is your objective of undertaking such a penance? How long have you been engaged in such a performance? What is your *varn* (वर्ण social category of classification)?”

#### 7-76 Shambuk killed (51 / 2919)

Ram learnt from the man on penance, “I am a *shudr*, and my name is *Shambuk*. I intend to bodily go to heaven.” Hearing about his tough resolve, and *varn* of *Shudr*, Ram pulling out the sword cut off his head. Gods appeared and appreciated his effort of eliminating this person who wanted to rise to the heaven in his physical form. This could have

spoiled the natural law of death after birth. Thereafter gods enquired from Ram whether he had any wish. Ram solicited the revival of the dead child of the Brahmin. Gods confirmed, “The child is already alive and has joined his family.”

Gods further informed Ram about the penance of Agastya, “He had undertaken tough penance for twelve years immersed in water. Today he has concluded it. We are going to extend our greetings to him for such a great performance. You may also come to see him.”

As advised, Ram also moved to the hermitage of Agastya. Before Ram arrived there, gods had left being duly greeted by Agastya. When Ram landed, he offered his respects to the sage Agastya. The sage also reciprocated by greeting Ram with great affection and respect. He appreciated his effort of killing unrighteous and ambitious *shudra* and consequently reviving the *brahmin*’s child.

The sage advised Ram to spend his night with him, and mentioned, “You are all in all, supreme among gods, and eternal entity, *Srimannarain*.”

Note: The *shlok* 7-76-29 is the statement of the accomplished sage Agastya confirming the supreme entity of Ram as *Narayan* Himself. Therefore the common concept of taking Valmiki depicting Ram as a model person should be taken in a correct perspective of his inherent divinity.

त्वं हि नारायणः श्रीमांस्त्वयि सर्वं प्रतिष्ठितम् । त्वं प्रभुः सर्वदेवानां पुरुषस्त्वं सनातन

Subsequently the sage offered a divine jewel to Ram mentioning, “It is made by *viswakarma*.”

Before receiving the divine jewel, Ram enquired from the sage, “Brahmins are also said be restricted from accepting the gifts. Being a *kshatriya* how can I accept the gift coming from the hand of a Brahmin?”

To satisfy his anxiety, Agastya narrated a story.

Long back in the primitive past there was no king. Brahma installed Indr as the king of gods. The terrestrial beings gathering at Brahma’s place requested him to appoint a king to them also. Brahma sent for all the gods and asked them to share one part of their brilliance to depute a king over earth. At that time Brahma sneezed and there came out a person called Kshapu. Brahma invoked all the shared brilliance of the gods over Kshapu and deputed him as the king over the earth.

Kshapu ruled the earth with the brilliance of *Indr*. He protected the physical body of the citizens with the brilliance of *Varun*. The treasury was maintained due to the brilliance of *kuber*, and he passed decree of reward or punishment from the constituent of *Yam*.

Agastya concluded, “You are also a king, and is impregnated with the brilliance of all the gods. For my wellbeing, from the part of Indr, accept my gift.”

Ram accepted the gift happily and enquired further from the sage, “How did you receive this jewel, and who had earlier made it?”

### 7-77 A celestial person eating a corpse (21 / 2940)

Agastya narrated a story.

‘In early part of *tretayug*, I had been in look out of a proper forest for my penance and meditation. My wandering brought me to a forest devoid of any animal and bird, but the trees were full of delicious fruits and roots. The forest was spread over length and width of one hundred *yojan*. In the centre of the forest there was a lake in the extant of one *yojan*. The lake had crystal clear water full with floating lotus. The bed of the lake was mud free, and water was sweet and palatable. Chirping birds of varieties of species enhanced the grandeur of the lake.

There was a lonely but charming hermitage. I spent a night of the summer month of *jyesth* in that hermitage. Next morning when I moved towards the lake, I saw a dead body of a healthy and charming person lying near the lake.

When I waited along the water edge of the lake, an aerial chariot landed near the dead body. The chariot had celestial dancers and sweet music and songs were heard. A person having charming personality came out of the chariot and moved towards the corpse. The man ate the corpse and drank water from the lake to his fill. When he was about to board the chariot, I asked him, “Who are you? Why do you undertake such a contemptible act of eating a corpse?”

### 7-78 Importance of a gift (29 / 2969)

The celestial person recited his autobiography.

‘There was a king of Vidarbha, named Sudesh. He had two wives and each gave him a son called Shwet and Surath. I am Shwet, and when my father died, I was made the king. I executed my responsibility diligently for long. Once, through some source I came to know about precise date of my death. Handing over the kingdom to my brother, Surath I came to this forest for mediation. My mediation continued for three thousand years, and ultimately upon my death I reached *Brahmalok*. While I was there I had a feeling of intense thirst and hunger. I enquired from Brahma, “In *Brahmalok* nobody should be afflicted from thirst and hunger, but contrarily I am the one who suffer from such affliction.”

Brahma asked me to visit daily this forest, and eat my own corpse. Every day I am doing this hateful deed. Brahma explained, “You have performed splendid austerity in penance but there is no evidence of a charity in your record. If you could have given gifts to others you could have never felt such affliction here in *Brahmalok*. Now there is no option, until you meet the sage Agastya. He would liberate you from your affliction.”

To satisfy my hunger every day I am coming here and eating my own dead body. Due to auspicious penance the body has become eternal, and never decays and recovers soon to its original form when I am finished with my eating.

I know you are Agastya, otherwise nobody else could have entered this dreadful forest. Kindly accept my gift of this precious jewel. It is capable of generating items on demand.

Agastaya resumed his story with Ram, "To liberate the king Shwet from his afflictions, I accepted his liberal charity. The moment I accepted his gift, the dead body disappeared. The king Shwet happily departed to *Brahmllok*. This is the same jewel which I had received from him."

### 7-79 Reign of the king Dand (20 / 2989)

Ram was curious to know about the reason for that forest (where Shwet had mediated) being desolated and devoid of living beings. Agastya narrated another story.

'In *satyug* *Manu* ruled for a long time. Subsequently he handed over the rule in the hands of his able son *Ikshavaku*. *Manu* dropped enough guidelines of rule and cautioned *Ikshavaku* to use punishment diligently, "Sparing the punishment spoils the reign. Properly delivered punishment against a crime or fault earns the king his worthiness."

Later, *Ikshavaku* was blessed with one hundred sons, and the youngest remained illiterate and fool. He did never care about the wellbeing of his elder brothers. *Ikshavaku* made him the king of the zone falling from south of *vindhya* to north of *shaival*. His name was Dand, and he appointing Shukracharya as his mentor. He established his capital at a place whom he called Madhumant. Gradually the people of his state emerged strong and healthy.'

### 7-80 Dand raped the daughter of Shukracharya (18 / 3007)

Continuing the story further Agastya mentioned.

Once during the month of *chaitr* चैत्र (one of the spring months) the king Dand arrived at the hermitage of his mentor Shukracharya. Having a glance of his daughter he became wild with lust. Getting close to her he solicited her association. The damsel replied, "I am Araja, elder daughter of Shukracharya, your *guru*. You should observe the rule of conduct, and should not behave like this with me. Anyhow, if you so much like me, seek my hands from my father. I understand he would not disappoint you."

The king Dand's stupidity didn't spare him, and he raped Araja. The king left, but Araja continued wailing awaiting the arrival of her father.

### 7-81 Dand cursed (22 / 3029)

Agastya continued with the consequences of immoral and condemnable act of the king.

Some of the disciples of Shukracharya informed him the incident at his ashram. Although he was hungry he rushed to his daughter. His anger was amplified by his hunger, and he pronounced curse over king, “For seven nights the state of Dand spread over one hundred *yojan* will suffer from the dust laden storm. Dand and his entire family will be eliminated. All the wild animals would desert this area. The area of one *yojan* around my *ashram* shall maintain the reserve of animals and birds around the big water lake.”

Speaking to his daughter, Araja, he mentioned, “You will remain here alive, but we will all quit this place. The living beings staying with you here shall also remain alive. A time will come when you will attain your liberation.” Araja accepted his command and stayed there.

The dust laden storm commenced and in seven nights the area was turned desolated. The king Dand with his family died.

Agastya concluded the story, “Subsequently this area became famous as Dandakaranya दण्डकारण्य (7-81-19). When the sages later came and stayed here, it has been known as Janasthan जनस्थान (7-81-20).”

Agastya indicated to Ram about the time for *sandhya* as the day had come to its end.

### 7-82 Ram back to Ayodhya (20 / 3059)

In the evening time Ram performed his normal worship. Later he ate fruits and roots before he retired for night. Next morning, after following his usual ritual, sought permission of the sage to leave for Ayodhya. The sages of the ashram arranged a heartfelt farewell. When he offered his departing obeisance to Agastya, he reciprocated with same warmth and invited him to visit the ashram again.

When Ram landed at the central entry to royal palace in Ayodhya, he released *pushpak* for its celestial parking. Moving towards his palace, he sent for Lakshaman and Bharat.

### 7-83 Bharat's view on *rajsuya ygya* (20/3079)

Meeting his brothers by embracing them, Ram spoke, “Fortunately, the issue of *brahmin's* child has been solved successfully. To enhance the glory of the kingdom, I intend to organise *rajsuya ygya* राजसूय यज्ञ.”

Counting the beneficiaries of the *ygya* in the past, Ram mentioned, “*Mitra*, performed this *ygya* and his enemies were eliminated. Subsequently he got the status of *Varun*. *Som* on its performance attained eternity of his status.”

Submitting his view Bharat spoke, “You are refuge of all the beings of the earth. The kings look to you as a hallmark of conduct. By performing *rajsuya* enemies are eliminated. This means the *ygya* is fraught with violence. In my view you should not perform any ritual which hurts any being of this earth.”



Ram praised Bharat for his excellent advice.

#### 7-84 Lakshaman pleaded for *ashvamedh* अश्वमेध *ygya* (18 / 3097)

Lakshaman submitted, “The performance of *ashvamedh* is learnt to auger all auspiciousness. When *Indr* was afflicted of killing *Vrutrasur* वृत्रासुर, a Brahmin, he was relieved of his sin by performing this *ygya*.”

To elaborate his view, Lakshaman narrated the full story.

‘Long time ago, when gods and demons had friendly terms, there was a great demon named *Vrutr* वृत्र. He had a strange body, one *yojan* wide and three *yojan* high. He was widely respected by all beings since he loved them affectionately. He was fully aware of righteousness; with his steadfast mind, he was grateful to others. During his reign the trees bore delicious fruits. There was enough yield of crops without tilling the land. Once it occurred to him that he should undertake penance for that is the only tool to secure eternal bliss, and all others are transitory in nature.

Anointing his son *Madhureshwar* as king he undertook the penance. *Indr* got afraid of his initiative and went to lord *Vishnu* and spoke to him, “Taking deep affection in you<sup>12</sup> the demon *Vrutr* had become so powerful (7-84-15). Now with the completion of his penance he would be our eternal master, and all gods shall stand in his service. You had helped us earlier, and now some mechanism should be developed for his end.’

#### 7-85 *Vrutr* वृत्र killed (22 / 3119)

Ram advised Lakshaman to complete the story. Accordingly, Lakshaman continued narrating the balance part of the story.

Lord *Vishnu* spoke to *Indra*, “Before your appeal I have already established an affectionate relation<sup>13</sup> with *Vrutr*, and therefore I can’t initiate his killing. You have to make efforts and I can share my potency in three ways: (i) with *Indr*, (ii) with his bolt, and (iii) with earth.”

Thus encouraged by *Vishnu*, gods and *Indr* came to the place where *Vrutr* was engaged in penance. Aura coming out of his body was so impressive that gods were not able to decide what to do. In the meantime *Indr* dashed his bolt over *Vrutr* who was immersed in his penance. *Vrutr* died, but impressed by his innocence, *Indr* strongly felt guilty minded. Finally he withdrew in the dark zone beyond the mountains. Gods were overjoyed on *Vrutr*’s end, but were sad about *Indr* who had disappeared mysteriously.

<sup>12</sup> यदा हि प्रीतिसंयोगं त्वया विष्णो समागतः । तदाप्रभृति लोकानां नात्यत्वमुपलब्धवान् । । 7-84-15

<sup>13</sup> पूर्व सौहृदबद्धोऽस्मि वृत्रस्येह महात्मनः 7-85-04

Gods approached *Vishnu* and submitted, "You have been instrumental in the killing of *Vrutr*, but *Indr* has been afflicted with the sin of killing a Brahmin. Now you can clear his blemish." Hearing gods, *Vishnu* advised, "*Indr* is required to organise *ashvamedh ygya* and worship my *ygya* form. That would only deliver his liberation from the sin. Finally, he would be resumed to his position of chief of gods."

### 7-86 *Asvamedh* liberated *Indr* (21 / 3140)

Lakshaman continued the story.

'With the initiative of gods, *Bruhaspati* went to the place where *Indr* had lied down afflicted by the sin. Keeping *Indr* in forefront, he conducted the *asvamedh ygya*. When the *ygya* was to be concluded, the sin deserted *Indr*, and asked for her place. She divided herself into four parts and sought four places of stay who can share the sin. (i) first quarter in water during rainy season, (ii) second quarter in earth, (iii) third quarter in women during menstruation period, (iv) last quarter afflicting killer of righteous Brahmins. Finally *Indr* resumed his responsibility as chief of gods.

Emphasising the importance of *asvamedh ygya*, Lakshaman submitted to Ram, "*asvamedh ygya* is worthy of ensuring all auspiciousness, and therefore, steps may be taken to initiate its performance."

### 7-87 *Ila* इल : male and female (29 / 3169)

Ram also narrated one story to illustrate the significance of *asvamedh ygya*.

In early days *Ila* was son of *Kardam* and he was king of *Bahlik*. He used to protect the citizens as his own children. Once during *chaitr* month he went for hunting in a forest. He killed scores of dreadful animals. Moving along with his attendants he happened to pass through a forest where *Skand* (the chief of gods army) was born. That was the entertainment place of *Shiv* with his divine consort *Parvati*. In that forest nobody is in masculine form. Everybody including *Shiv* was in feminine form.

The king also along with his entourage was transformed into feminine form. He was upset with this development. He could immediately realise that *Shiv* could be of help. Chanting his glory he pleased *Shiv* who asked him for the boon except the transformation into male. As a result, the frustrated king didn't solicit any blessing, and passionately prayed goddess *Parvati*. She grew compassionate on him, and mentioned, "Your solicitation is to regain your male form. In this regard, I have limitation of granting you only half boon, the rest is in the jurisdiction of lord *Shiv*. Thus, I can grant you to become male for half life only. You have to decide the sequence of period yourself."

*Ila* preferred the monthly cycle of alternating between male and female. He was also assured, "When you are male in a given month you won't be able to remember anything of your previous one month as a female. So shall be the case in the succeeding female month, all memory of male month shall stand erased."

**7-88 Ilaa इला met Budh (24 / 3193)**

Ilaa was already transformed in a charming woman and she preferred to retain the same form in the first month. Her attendants who had also become women, moved with her. Leaving behind their chariots and horses, they traversed enjoying the natural scene around. Subsequently they reached a lake, and saw a man immersed deep in water. He was engaged in meditation.

The lake was out of the restricted zone of Shiv and Parvati. The man was Budh. Ilaa also entered the lake water and enjoyed the cool bath. While she was in water, Budha could see her and was passionately attracted by her beauty. Coming out of lake, Budha came to his ashram and called those women attendants. He enquired about her from them. They replied, "She is our master and she is still single."

Budh invoked his celestial skill called *aavartaani vidya*, and could come to know all about the king Ila. He advised those attendants to occupy the nearby mountains where enough fruits and roots were available and called them *kimpurshi* (*kinnari*, i.e., woman *kinnar*). He assured them, "subsequently you will meet your match here."

**7-89 Ilaa gave birth to Pururava (25 / 3218)**

Bharat and Lakshaman were surprised to know about the genesis of *kimpurushi*, and were excited to learn what happened to Ilaa thereafter. Ram continued the story.

'When those attendants were gone, Budh spoke to Ilaa, "I am Budh, son of *Som* god. You may take me your well wisher soliciting your affection." She replied, "I am free, and alone roaming around here. We may stay together comfortably, and I am at your disposal." Thereafter Budh and Ilaa enjoyed the conjugal pleasure for the period of a month. Thus the month of *vaishak* was over, and Ilaa was transformed to a male form.

When Ila woke up on his bed in the morning of the first day of the next month, he saw Budh performing penance in lake water. He enquired from Budh, "Where is my horde of attendants? I had been here with them." Ila had lost the residual memory of previous month as a woman. Budh spoke, "Those attendants have been killed in a heavy hail storm. Scared by the storm, you saved your life in this ashram."

The king Ila further mentioned, "My attendants are dead, but I have to go back to my kingdom. I can't stay here longer now. My eldest son Shashbindu is very capable prince, and I have to perform his coronation. I have also to look after the interest of the citizens of my kingdom."

Impressing upon him, Budh spoke in sweet words, "O, King! After your stay of one year, I would able to extend any help to you."

Ila stayed there for one year. Every alternate month when he was in woman form, Budh used to enjoy the conjugal relation. Subsequently in the ninth month, a brilliant son was

born from Ilaa, who was later called Pururava. Immediately after the birth, the child attained the age to be initiated to *ygyopaveet samskar* (sacred thread).

During the male months, the king Ila used to undertake religious exercises of meditation and listening to legends from Budh.

### 7-90 Asvamedh ygya helped Ila (24 / 3242)

Ram continued the story further which confirmed the benefits of *asvamedth ygya*.

'It was the last month of the year when Budh had started living with Ila, and it was a male month. Budh invited the sages Samvart, Chyavan, Arishtnemi, Pramodan, Modakar, and Durvasa. They together began pondering over a way out for liberation of the king Ila from the cycle of male and female. In the meanwhile, Kardam, father of Ila, also arrived there accompanied by Pulastya, Kratu, Vashatkar, and Onkar. Discussing among themselves over various way outs, Kardam proposed, "God Shankar would only be able to liberate Ila. Therefore, *asvamedha ygya* should be performed keeping Shankar keeping as main deity."

Other sages also consented to the proposal of Kardam. The *ygya* was commenced near the *ashram* of Budh, under the stewardship of Marutt, a disciple of Samvart. On the conclusion of the *ygya* Shankar appeared and enquired, "I am happy with the performance of this *ygya*. What can I do for Ila, the king of Bahlik?" The sages prayed him to liberate Ila from the cycle of womanship. He granted to be so, and disappeared. The sages also dispersed happily.

Later, Ila offered the kingdom of Bahlik to his son Shashbindu, and established a new kingdom in the central zone (on the confluence of *ganga* and *yamuna*) which was called Pratishtanpur. Subsequently Pururava became the king of the state of Pratishtanpur established earlier by Ila.'

Concluding the story, Ram emphasised the significance of *asvamedh ygya* which liberated Ila from the life of womanship.

### 7-91 Preparations for *asvamedh* (29 / 3271)

Having deliberated with Bharat and Lakshaman, finally Ram gave his consent for the performance of *asvamedh ygya*. The proposal received the blessings of Vashishath, Vamdev, Jabali, Kashyap and others. The venue of the *ygya* was determined to be at *Naimisharnya* on the bank of *Gomati*.

Accordingly Ram advised Lakshaman to invite Sugriv, Vibhishan and other vassal kings with the horde of attendants. Brahmins and sages from all quarters were invited. Necessary preparations were made at *Naimisharnya*. All the items to ensure comfortable stay of the invitees were brought from *Ayodhya*. At several places on way to *Naimisharnya* from *Ayodhya*, necessary arrangements were made for convenient and comfortable stay.

Army preceded the movement of Bharat who was accompanied by queen mothers, wives of the brothers, gold statue of Sita (7-91-25), Brahmins and helper attendants. Sugriva and Vibhishan had arrived in time and helped the travel of the people from Ayodhya to Naimisharnya. Sugriva took care of serving food to *brahmins*, and Vibhishan attentively served the sages.

### 7-92 Valuable gifts in asvamedh (19 / 3290)

Bharat moved out with all arrangements of ygya at Naimisharny. Subsequently, a black horse (looking like *krishnsar* deer) symbolising the ygya was allowed to move freely over earth. It was escorted by Lakshaman.

Ram arrived at Naimisharnya and was glad to see the preparations. The vassal kings offered lots of gifts for the successful completion of ygya.

The ygya horse came back successfully to Naimisharnya (7-92-9). The ygya continued over one year (7-92-19). All sorts of sweet foods made of jiggery, milk and fruits were liberally distributed. The precious items were distributed among the people according to their choice. The charity continued endlessly and there was no dearth of any item at any time. Sages had lots of appreciation for the grandeur of the ygya.

### 7-93 Valmiki arrived in ygya (19/ 3309)

With the commencement of ygya, Valmiki, the illustrious among sages and son of Varun (7-93-17) also arrived at Naimisharny with two sons of Sita. He stayed in a cottage where all sorts of fruits and roots were kept in abundance. The sage commanded those twin brothers to recite the melodious Ramayan accompanied with sweet notes of violin. The songful presentation was to be made at all places: streets, cottages of sages and *Brahmins*, camps of queens and kings, *ygyashala*, and where Ram stayed with his regal brothers.

Valmiki advised them, “At least twenty *sarg* should be recited every day. If Ram enquires about your identity tell him that you are disciples of Valmiki. Take fruits and roots from the surrounding forest, and never crave for valuable gifts of the ygya. Mendicants have nothing to do with precious royal gifts.”

### 7-94 Ramayan presented by Lav – Kush (32 / 3341)

It was morning time, and twin brothers after completing their normal ritual, began the recital of *Ramayan* over violin. The notes and rhythms were so captivating that Ram invited them for presentation. Large gathering of sages, Brahmins, kings, citizens took place and Ram with his brothers attended the sweet concert of Lav and Kush.

Initially twin brothers made the songful presentation of the condensed first *sarg* recited by Narad. Thereafter they covered twenty more *sarg*. Due to arrival of noon time, the presentation was suspended. Those who attended the concert were of the impression

that the twins had face matching with Ram. If they remove matted hair and robe, they would exactly resemble Ram.

Impressed by their expert presentation, Ram asked Bharat to gift each of them eighteen thousand gold coins. They didn't accept the gift and mentioned, "It's of no use for us in the forest."

Ram enquired, "Who wrote this epic? How many *sarg* and *shlok* are there in the complete work?"

Twins replied, "It has been composed by the sage Valmiki. He is already here to grace the *ygya*. It has twenty four thousand *shlok* and over hundred stories. It has six *kand* covered in over five hundred *sarg*. There is *uttar kand* also which concludes this epic. The sage has covered your entire life sketch. If you prefer to listen to its entire content allow me time when you are free from *ygya*."

#### **7-95 Sita to certify by oath (17 / 3358)**

Ram continued listening to Ramayan presented by Lav and Kush for several days. Along with him monkeys, citizens, sages and Brahmins also were benefited by the presentation. Through the story of presentation Ram learnt that the two ascetics were sons of Sita.

He sent a messenger to Valmiki, "If Sita prefers it, she should come in the conference of citizens and sages and prove by taking oath about her chastity. This is how my blemish could be cleared. This could be done in tomorrow's gathering."

When the messenger conveyed the message to Valmiki, he agreed what Ram wanted and mentioned, "She will do what he commands. Obeying husband's command is the topmost priority of a married woman."

When Ram heard the message of Valmiki, he fixed tomorrow morning for hearing Sita. Announcing thus to all sages and citizens, he dispersed the meeting to resume tomorrow.

#### **7-96 Valmiki supported Sita (24 / 3382)**

Next morning large gathering took place around *ygyashala*. Besides a large assemblage of monkys, demons, citizens, brhamins and sages, chief of the sages present were Vashishath, Vamdev, Jabali, Kashyap, Vishwamitr, Dirghatama, Durvasa, Pulastya, Shakti, Bhargav, Vaman, Markandeya, Modgalya, Garg, Chyavan, Shatanand, Gautam, Katyayan, Suygya, and Agastya.

Valmiki arrived followed by Sita, as if *shruti* (holy scripture) had followed Brahma. Out of sheer modesty, Sita came looking over ground. Her eyes were full of tears, and heart carried the image of Ram. Her arrival was acclaimed by loud hails of 'glory to Ram', 'glory to Sita', 'glory to Sita and Ram'.

Entering the assemblage, Valmiki submitted to Ram, “You deserted her fearing public criticism. I know how much you love her and how much she loves you. You are sure about her chastity but public criticism caused her separation again. When she arrived near my *ashram*, I could see through my meditation about her pure chastity and unalloyed affection in you. Thereafter she entered my *ashram*.”

Valmiki further assured him, “I am tenth son of *pracheta* (*Varun*), and have never spoken lie and made any false statement. On her behalf, I swear by my earnings of auspiciousness gathered through penances, that she is pure and chaste. She is not worthy of being blemished. Lav and Kush are your sons.”

### **7-97 Sita took oath and entered netherworld (26 / 3408)**

Hearing Valmiki, Ram stood with folded hands, and taking a glance of Sita, looked towards the gathering. Addressing Valmiki he spoke, “You are knower of three dimensions of time, past, present and future. Sita had proved her chastity in presence of gods earlier, and I have absolutely no doubt about her. She arrived with me in Ayodhya and stayed together in inner palace. Later, I came to know of simmering denouncement in certain section of citizens about her chastity. To clear the public doubt, I discarded her again. I know Lav and kush are my sons. I fully trust and endorse the statement of the sage Valmiki, but let Sita herself repeat her oath of chastity before the gathering.”

Soon the sky got occupied by gods Aditya, *Vasu*, *Rudr*, *Vishwadev*, *Marudgan*, and *Nag*, *Garud* including other accomplished celestial beings.

Sita, keeping her gaze down and with folded palms spoke, “If I have faithfully loved with my word, mind, and deed, Ram and no other person let the goddess earth give me a position in her holy lap.”

Lo and behold! A beautiful throne carried by *naga* appeared from earth. Goddess earth had herself accompanied the throne. She embraced Sita within her arms, and taking in her lap sat over the throne. The throne gradually moved inside the earth. Gods and sages showered flowers. Cool and fragrant breeze permeated all around. Some were stunned, while others felt overjoyed. Some were found glorifying loudly and joyously, while some undertook mediation. Some had fixed their gaze at Ram, and some had been looking at Sita only. This was unexpectedly a stunning scene.

### **7-98 Brahma consoled Ram (28 / 3436)**

On her departure inside earth, Ram was immersed in deep sorrow. Taking support of a *gular* club, he wept bitterly. Addressing earth he spoke, “As you have given refuge to her, give refuge to me also. I know you are my mother-in-law and you will give me affection. If you ignore my request, I may lose my temper and entire earth would be made desolated or flooded with water.”

While Ram lamented loudly about her, Brahma appeared and consoled him, “Sita is goddess Lakshmi. Although you know about yourself, I like to remind you about your

supreme divine form. Through earth she had gone to your abode, and when you go back there in *saketlok*, you will find her there.”

Brahma continued further, “The sage Valmiki has covered all the episodes and events of your life very nicely in the epic which you have listened these days. The rest of *uttarkand* is yet to be recited to you. I direct the sage from my *lok* to do that.”

Thereafter Brahma disappeared.

Ram spoke to Valmiki, “As indicated by Brahma, I should be benefited by the presentation of the rest portion of Ramayan. This should commence tomorrow morning.”

Ram left for his cottage taking with him Lav and Kush, and continued reflecting on Sita.

### **7-99 Ram’s routine (20/ 3456)**

Next morning Ram listened to the balance part of Ramayan which covered his future. He was upset with the departure of Sita, but concluded the *ygya* successfully. He bade farewell to all invitees including sages, Brahmins, monkeys, demons, and citizens with liberal gifts of precious items.

Subsequently coming over to Ayodhya he spent his days with his two sons and family members. He continued performing *ygya* until his stay of ten thousand years. *Asvamedh* was performed umpteen times, accompanied by ten times of *Vajpeya ygya*. He didn’t marry any other woman, and in all *ygya* installed on his side, Sita made of gold.

During his reign there was no complain of draught. Grains were found in abundance. Nobody suffered affliction and premature death.

In course of time Kauslya left for abode of her husband. Subsequently, Sumirtr and Kaikeyi discarded their mortal remains and joined Dasartha happily in the other world. Ram had been punctually offering precious charities in the name of mothers.

### **7-100 Bharat moved to *gandharv desh* (25 /3481)**

Once, *Gargya*, the preceptor of king Yudhajit of Kaikeyadesh, came to see Ram. He was sent by the king Yudhajit, and had carried lots of gifts of ten thousand horses<sup>14</sup>, and precious blankets etc. When Ram heard the arrival of sage, he moved forward to extend warm reception to the sage.

When the sage settled in his high seat, Ram enquired about the message of the king. The sage conveyed the message of Yudhajit, “On either side of the river *Sindhu*, there lies *gandharv desh* full of fruit bearing trees and other resources. Over thirty million *gandharv* keep watch over the territory. It is advisable to win this land and settle two separate cities.”

<sup>14</sup> *Kaikeydesh* (part of Afghanistan) is known for high breed horses and woolen garments.



Ram readily agreed to the proposal, and asked Bharat to move with his princely sons Taksh and Pushkal to win the territory of *gandharv desh*. With this intention, Ram crowned both the princes, Taksh and Pushkal as king of two emerging states over there in *gandharv desh*.

Subsequently Bharat moved with a large army accompanied by princes. On way hordes of meat eating deadly demons and animals joined the army. It took one and a half month for the forces of *Ayodhya* to reach *Kaikeya desh*.

### 7-101 Bharat secured victory (18/ 3499)

Yudhajit and Bharat collectively made attack over *gandharv desh*. Fierce fighting took place and for seven days the carnage continued. Streams of blood and hills of corpses marked the battle ground. None could appear to secure victory. Lastly, Bharat invoked a deadly weapon of *Kaldand* that was called *Samvart*. This weapon killed all the thirty million *gandharva* and Bharat emerged victorious.

Subsequently, two cities Takshashila and Pushkalavat were settled making Taksh and Pushkal incharge of those cities respectively. It took five years for Bharat to settle those cities fully and later, he came back to Ram.

### 7-102 Crowning of Angad and Chadraketu (17 / 3516)

When Bharat returned from *gandharv desh*, and apprised in detail about the operations, Ram blessed him for his bravery. Later, one day he addressed his brothers and mentioned, "Angad and Chandraketu have the potential to take care of independent charge of states. Let us find out suitable places for them."

Bharat advised the land of Karupath, and Ram agreed to his proposal. Subsequently, Karupath was annexed in the territory of *Ayodhya*. Ram anointed two princes with crown and sent as king of newly carved out states. With Angad went Lakshaman, and helped him in settling the city of Angadiya. It took him one year, to make Angad comfortable in his control, and thereafter, he came back to Ram.

Chandraketu was accompanied by Bharat, and he took command of the city of Chandrakanta. After staying for one year, when Chandraketu settled in his role of administrator, Bharat came back to *Ayodhya*.

### 7-103 Arrival of kal<sup>15</sup> काल (17 / 3533)

In course of time, kal काल disguised as an ascetic came to *Ayodhya*. He requested Lakshaman on entry place to inform Ram about arrival of a messenger of sage Atibal. When Lakshaman informed Ram, he asked to bring in the ascetic with due respect. Ram offered him arghy, padya etc and honoured him over a high seat. When settled, Ram

<sup>15</sup> Refer the next sarg 104, shlok-2 which defines what is kal. It is the time keeper of every being.

enquired about his purpose of arrival. The ascetic mentioned, "Before I disclose the message, there is a condition that no third person except you and me shall remain here, nor hear our conversation, nor would see us talking."

Ram readily agreed and asked Lakshaman to be strict in maintaining this condition of not allowing anybody's entry here inside, nor see us talking here, otherwise the trespasser would be killed by me.

### 7-104 Ram got the message (19 / 3552)

When Lakshaman ensured the implementation of the condition of talk, Ram invited him to begin his conversation and message. *Kal* spoke, "When the creation was to be initiated, during the period of *hirnyagarbha*, you created me as all pervading delusory force माया. I became the time keeper for each and every being of the creation including yourself."

Brahma had sent me here with the message, "while you decided to come over earth for end of demons you had fixed eleven thousand years as your stay period. The time is now over. Either plan to comeback or you may extend it as you wish."

*Kal* narrated what Brahma had mentioned, "Back in the past you withdrew the entire creation within yourself, and slept in ocean. Later, in the beginning, first you created me. Thereafter you created snake called *Anant*, having huge hood and body who could stay and sleep in water. Subsequently, Madhu and Kaitabh, two demons were created. From the huge skeleton of the demons earth was created which got one name as *medini* मेदिनी (7-104-6). From your navel had come out a brilliant lotus, and I was created. I was made in-charge of expanding the creation. Subsequently I prayed you to uphold each and every being by your presence. Answering my prayer, you became *Vishnu* as eternal person and upholder of the entire creation (7-104-9). Subsequently from *Aditi* you appeared as *Vaman* and encouraged *Indr* and other gods in righteousness. Later when the atrocities of Ravan had culminated to a critical stage, you incarnated in human form. The time period fixed by you for stay of eleven thousand years is now over. If you wish to come back to your divine abode, you are welcome in your initial form of *Vishnu* and take command of the master of all the gods."

Ram welcomed the proposal and spoke to *kal*, "I have decided to come back. In fact I had thought about you, and you are here."

### 7-105 Episode of Durvasa (18 / 3570)

While Ram and *kal* were together, Durvasa arrived at the palace. He asked Lakshaman to arrange immediate meeting with Ram. Lakshaman enquired politely, "Ram is busy with somebody. What can I do for you?"

Hearing Lakshaman, Durvasa looked at him with wide red eyes as if he would burn him to ashes, and then burst out loudly, "If you delay my message to Ram, I would curse you, Ram, the entire family, and Ayodhya. I can't contain my anger any longer."

Lakshaman immediately intimated Ram about Durvasa's arrival. Seeing off *kal*, Ram welcomed Durvasa and offered his respect to him. He enquired the sage, "How can I serve you."

Durvasa spoke to Ram, "For thousand years I was on fast. I have completed it today and I need immediate food." Ram served him delicious food and getting satisfied to his fill, Druvasa left peacefully.

After departure of Durvasa, Lakshaman was apprehending the capital punishment. Ram was also concerned about Lakshaman's conveying of message while *kal* was inside.

#### **7-106 Ram discarded Lakshaman (18 / 3588)**

Ram was in a dilemma of his vow. His face had turned pale. Lakshaman came to him and requested him to observe the *dharm* and punish him with the penalty of death. Ram couldn't speak, and called the meeting of the ministers and sages. On hearing the incident, sage Vashishth mentioned, "I had known it earlier. Large scale destruction is imminent. I would advise to abandon Lakshaman which is equivalent to capital punishment."

In the meeting itself Ram announced, "Hence forth I discard Lakshaman."

Lakshaman got tears in his eyes, and straightway he came to *saryu* bank. Performing *achamaniyam* (touching palmful sacred water to mouth) with *saryu* water, he sat spine erect, and held his breath inside. Gods showered flower over him. Soon his body disappeared, and he departed to the otherworld where he was given warm welcome by Indr and others. Thus one fourth of the potency of *Narayan* returned to eternal divine abode.

#### **7-107 Lav and Kush crowned (21 / 3609)**

Departure of Lakshaman was a jolt to Ram. He called Bharat and spoke to him, "I would crown you the king now, and would depart to forest following the path of Lakshaman." Bhart didn't agree and he proposed, "Let Lav and Kush be crowned instead. Lav should be master of north kosal, and Kush shall be the king of south kosal."

In the meanwhile Vashishath drew his attention to the citizens of Ayodhya who were lying flat. Ram picked them up and enquired their demand. They mentioned, "Where ever you go, we will follow you."

Ram agreed, and thereafter, he arranged the coronation of Lav and Kush, and they were made king of north and south kosal respectively. A messenger was sent to Shatrughn to summon him in Ayodhya.

#### **7-108 Departing directions (38 / 3647)**

The messenger took three days and three nights in reaching Madhurapuri. On their arrival, they narrated all episodes which had taken place in Ayodhya: Lakshaman's

departure, coronation of Lav and Kush, and preparation of Bharat and citizens of Ayodhya to depart with Ram. They also informed, "On north of vindhya, a city called kushavati had been established for Kush. Similarly for Lav, Shravasti has been established." They advised him move immediately to Ayodhya.

Shatrughn called his ministers and priest Kanchan and informed them what had happened in Ayodhya. He also crowned his son Subahu as king of Madhura, and the other son Shatrughati as king of Vidisha. Thus he divided his kingdom in two parts to his two sons.

He moved in a single chariot to Ayodhya. Meeting Ram, he submitted, "I have come fully prepared to depart with you. Kindly don't direct me with any other command. I can't survive your absence anymore."

In the meanwhile, the monkeys and bears arrived lead by Sugriv. Having known about his planned departure they had arrived in Ayodhya. They also sought his permission to depart with him. Sugriv mentioned, "I am free for departure as I have crowned Angad as king (7-108-23)."

Addressing them Ram mentioned, "Hanuman shall be here until end of universe and enjoy my legend as desired by him. Vibhishan shall continue in Lanka until end of the existence of earth. Vibhishan will also take care of my family deity<sup>16</sup> Lord Ranganath. Jambvan, Maind and Dwvid shall stay until advent of kaliyug or dissolution as the case may be. The rest of monkeys and bears including Sugriv can accompany me."

#### 7-109 Ram moved out of Ayodhya (22 / 3669)

Early morning Ram made the great departure. He left Ayodhya, and moved towards Saryu. As arranged by Vashishath, recitation of *mantr* observing proper scriptural procedures took place. Brahmins lead the horde carrying the sacrificial fire used by Ram at his personal square. The umbrella used in *Vajpeya ygya* was also carried. Ram was flanked by *sridevi*<sup>17</sup> on right with louts in her hands, and *bhudevi* on left. His destructive potential moved in front. Ram carried *kush* in his hand, and kept reciting scriptural *mantr*. His divine weapons accompanied him in humanly form. Four *ved* were present in the guise of Brahmins.

Bharat and Shatrughn followed him with the women of the palace. Entire Ayodhya had been following him on his footsteps. Monkeys, demons and birds were gladly following him.

<sup>16</sup> आराध्य जगन्नाथमिक्षवाकुलदैवतम् 7-108-30

<sup>17</sup> रामस्य दक्षिणे पार्श्वे सपद्मा श्रीरूपाश्रिता । सव्येऽपि च मही देवी व्यवसायस्तथाग्रतः 7-109-06

**7-110 Divine integration (28 / 3697)**

About one and a half *yojan* away from Ayodhya, Ram looking to the west took a glance of *saryu*. The moment he entered *saryu* water Brahma welcome<sup>18</sup> him from sky, “You may merge in your four handed *Vishnu* form<sup>19</sup> or in the infinite space as you deem fit.” Bouquets of flowers were showered over him. Fragrant cool breeze pervaded all over. Ram with all his brothers merged in *Vishnu* form<sup>20</sup>.

Before merging in his divine form he had advised Brahma, “Those who are following me here should be provided worthy divine abodes because they have affectionately served me.” Brahma assured them *santanak lok* next to his own abode and near to *saket lok*. Those who were born from the parcel of gods merged in their respective parental body. Sugriv merged in the sun, and other monkeys accordingly merged in the respective gods. Those who took a dip in *saryu* water reached their respective abodes as proclaimed by Brahma.

**7-111 Glory to the primordial epic (25 / 3722)**

This is the grand end of Valmiki Ramayan.

Valmiki had predicted, “After departure of Ram, Ayodhya shall be completely deserted and desolated. Later in the period of Rishabh, it will regain its dynamism.”

Uttar kand contains the legend after performance of *ygya* also. Those who recite it, or listen to it are tipped to be favoured by the divinity for their overall wellbeing. If someone desires son, he is blessed with that. If someone desires wealth his wish is granted. Those who offer fabulous gifts to the person who had recited the Ramayan shall be granted his favourite demand.

<sup>18</sup> आगच्छ विष्णो भद्रं ते दिष्ट्या प्राप्तोऽसि राघव 7-110-08

<sup>19</sup> यामिच्छसि महाबाहो तां तन प्रविश स्विकाम् 7-110-09 वैष्णवीं तां महातेजो यद्वाकाशं सनातनम् 7-110-10

<sup>20</sup> विवेश वैष्णवं तेजः सशरीरः सहानुजः 7-110-12